

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

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## THE RULE OF FEAR.

BY GUGLIELMO FERRERO.

A NATION that desires peace—and here I refer especially to those Great Powers upon whom rest almost exclusively the responsibilities of peace and war—seems at first sight to have the choice of two methods to attain it. The first method consists of a firm and resolute attitude towards refractory States, and the creation of confidence among the pacific nations: the latter will then spontaneously evolve an effective means of co-operation, thus making warlike action by the discontented increasingly difficult. This was the plan which the founders of the League of Nations proposed to follow at the time of the League's inception, and which they have gradually abandoned, particularly after 1930, in favour of the alternative method.

According to the latter, the peace-seeking nation, by means of the most prudent and restrained conduct, must first of all avoid any directly quarrelsome issue with the aggressive State, and in those issues which cannot be avoided, must be ready to give way, even at the expense of dignity or of more tangible sacrifices. Secondly, it must hold itself aloof from all conflicts arising between other Powers, although the outcome of such conflict may, by the enfeeblement or overthrow of weaker States, involve vital changes in the general balance of power. Finally, it must ceaselessly strengthen its own defence forces in order to reduce the likelihood of direct aggression against itself, and to arrest the conflagration already spreading in other parts of the world.

I have said that those Powers desirous of peace have gradually, particularly since the year 1930, abandoned the first policy in favour of the second. Indeed France and Britain, the two European Powers principally interested in the preservation of peace, have, for the last seven years, merely made an attempt at the first policy without ever carrying it through to its logical



conclusion, and have broken it off at the first sign of difficulty, to resort to the second policy of individual security. The latter certainly has the advantage of sparing the nation the strain and effort required by a resolute policy of opposing the threats of aggressive Powers. At first sight this policy also appears to ward off the dreaded menace of war, by allowing aggressors to have their way in matters sufficiently unrelated to the nation's interests, in the hope that they will thus exhaust their energies. I believe, however, such calculations, if they really are calculations and not merely the result of lazy and complacent inactivity, to be entirely mistaken. If this policy is followed, the danger of war is merely retarded and becomes more serious. The events of the last seven years prove this beyond a doubt. If we recall these events in chronological order, it will help us to undersand why the pacific States, in choosing a policy of individual protection in preference to one of international solidarity, have taken a path leading inevitably to war.

The policy of the League of Nations, that is the policy of international solidarity, was first put to the test during the struggle between China and Japan (September, 1931—March, 1933). According to the book, the conflict should have been settled by arbitration agreed upon by all members of the League, whereas in actual fact the deciding factor was the force of arms. It is true that the members of the League condemned the conduct of Japan, but nothing whatever was done in the form of sanctions rigorous enough to force the delinquent State to abandon illegal methods. There was no lack, certainly, of speechifying, advice and denunciation, but the actual and effective aid which the members of the League were bound by the Pact to extend to China, was not forthcoming. Further, it was not extended because this step would have involved risks which the principal Powers were not prepared to take. France had interests in Indo-China, Great Britain in Hong-Kong and elsewhere in the Far East, while the United States had economic interests against which Japan was in a position to retaliate.

Japan quickly realized that the League's policy would place no serious obstacles in her way, for the very good reason that neither France, Britain, nor the United States were disposed whole-heartedly to support that policy. In the course of her



diplomatic controversy with China and with the other members of the League of Nations, both at the Council of the League and before the Assembly, she was able to estimate the true value of the League's policy. It soon became clear that this policy would never go beyond the limits of verbal protestation and did not even involve Japan's expulsion from the League. The latter's half-hearted intervention failed to render the slightest assistance to China; but, on the contrary, it furthered considerably the cause of Japan, in the first place by revealing the real desires of the States that had cause for alarm at the prospect of her victory, and also by dulling the fears of the Powers with regard to their own interests while the policy of solidarity was being attempted.

The experience gained by this episode was not without value to a Power whose intentions were very similar to those of Japan. There is no doubt that the Italian Government, in putting into action its long-conceived plans for the conquest of Abyssinia, counted on the weakness and indecision of the League's policy, as glaringly shown up when put to the test in the matter of Manchuria. For Italy, once in possession of Eritrea, had always aimed at annexing the Abyssinian highlands. As long as she believed, however, that France and Britain were ready to defend the colonial *status quo*, she would not have dreamed of undertaking the conquest. It was towards the end of 1933, after the failure of the League in the struggle between China and Japan, that the head of the Italian government ordered the preparations for the war in Abyssinia, which he considered necessary to wage within two years from that date, probably to avoid the risk of a change in the international situation. The Italian Government was not mistaken in its estimate of the League's policy, for in spite of the great agitation and protest raised at the outset of the war, as soon as more definite action became necessary, the League hesitated, and finally failed in its task.

Subsequently there was a great to-do as to who was to blame. In France the responsibility for the League's failure has been thrown for the moment on M. Laval; but the truth of the matter is that M. Laval's policy was very popular in France, and nowhere was real opposition raised against it. Even the



Socialists were reserved in their criticism. The people were unanimous with the Government in their readiness to sacrifice Abyssinia for the safety of France; it was hoped that Italy, satisfied with her conquest, would then range herself on the side of France against Germany. No one was concerned with the obligations undertaken in the League Covenant; in other words no one seriously considered facing the immediate risks of a policy of solidarity for the sake of the preservation of international peace. I have myself been able to verify that the majority of Frenchmen had not the slightest idea of what the League was, or of what it stood for. A professor of the Sorbonne and member of the Institute said to me, as though stating a self-evident truth: "For France, the League is simply the obligation of the rest of Europe to come to her aid, should she be attacked by Germany."

England seemed at first to take a more serious view of the Abyssinian affair and its possible repercussions on the whole European situation. British opinion appeared to realize that the invasion of Abyssinia was capable of upsetting the already precarious balance of peace, and demanded from her government the application of the Covenant. The British Government seemed desirous of putting the machinery of the League into motion. During the days which followed Sir Samuel Hoare's speech at Geneva in September, 1935, it was said among the delegates that the British Foreign Secretary had given the assurance of England's decision to go the whole hog. I do not know if this was true, but it was generally believed, and the whole policy at Geneva was determined by this belief. Then, at the end of the year, we were confronted by the Hoare-Laval plan! This plan consisted of the transformation of the League from an instrument of defence against aggression, into one which not only made it easier but also less dangerous for the aggressors. It was, thus, an attempt by two of the greatest peace-seeking Powers of Europe to withdraw from the risk and effort demanded by the application of the Covenant, and to sacrifice the weak to the strong.

The indignation of British public opinion caused this plan to be abortive and, in any case, the Italian Government had no intention of accepting it. But some months later, when the



military resistance of the Abyssinians was broken, British public opinion likewise jibbed at assuming the responsibility for more severe measures than those of economic sanctions. The latter did not seriously impede the course of the war, they merely served to exasperate the Italian Government, who were able to celebrate not only their victory over Abyssinia, but also their triumph over the League's policy.

The British and French statesmen were certainly not undismayed at this further discrediting of the League, for which they were responsible, but their dismay did not prevent them from being delighted when the Assembly of the League, on the evening of July 4th, 1936, decided on the raising of sanctions. Those who were present at Geneva on that evening were able to verify the general satisfaction among English and French circles at the triumph of the "realist policy," as it was called by British conservatives and French socialists alike. They were both content to have assured the peace of England and France for some time to come, through the sacrifice of Abyssinia; Italy would now, it was assumed, become a conservative nation, who would unite with the other pacific nations, and resist with them the actual or potential enemies of international law.

Once again the realist policy was mistaken. Scarcely two weeks passed before the Spanish troubles began. Now the Spanish conflict was closely linked to the Abyssinian war, and the significance of this link must be grasped if we are to understand the present situation in Europe. In February, 1936, in the middle of the Abyssinian war, the head of the Italian Government came to an understanding with the Spanish generals preparing their rebellion. He wanted a friendly government at Madrid, who would be willing to support him by allowing him to make use of the Balearic Isles and other naval bases in the struggle which was likely to break out sooner or later between Italy and England. Italy had then, in the middle of the Abyssinian war, begun seriously to involve herself in Spanish affairs, in anticipation of a war with England. If the reasoning of British and French statesmen, which caused them to sacrifice Abyssinia and the League for the sake of their own peace, had been correct, the Italian Government would have ceased negotiations with Spain after the raising of



sanctions. On the contrary, it increasingly renewed its efforts to the point of sending an army into Spain. The reason for this was, of course, that if the Italian Government had feared a war with Britain before the raising of sanctions, it feared one afterwards still more. In this apparent paradox lies the key to the whole European situation of to-day. The British Government has sent quantities of friendly letters to the head of the Italian government during the last year; it has been extravagant in expressions of cordiality, and has even signed certain papers, but it has continued to arm with feverish haste. Promises and pacts have little value to Signor Mussolini, since he is an adept at the violation of them. One factor only counts with him: arms. A great deal more than a "gentleman's agreement" is necessary to allay the anxieties of the Italian Government, as long as Britain continues to control the Suez Canal and to increase her armaments. What Italy aims at is a totally new balance of power in the Mediterranean, and one more favourable to her own security. For this reason she not only does not diminish her intervention in Spain, but continues to strengthen it as much as possible.

If France and Britain find themselves to-day in the position of grappling with a thorny problem in Spain, it is the result of their own policy in the Abyssinian war, in which they were concerned exclusively with their individual security. This exclusive concern has, in its turn, raised complications in Spain. Events in that country have again placed France and Great Britain in the position of choosing between two policies to secure peace. According to international law which has been in force for two centuries, France and Great Britain have not only the right, but are bound to supply the Spanish Government with the arms it requires. Italy and Germany, on the other hand, by supplying arms to the insurgents, committed an act of war against Spain according to the tenets of the League. No one can say what would have happened if France and Britain had fulfilled their obligations to the Spanish Government but fearing a more or less hypothetical international war, they invented "non-intervention." The latter had the appearance of a middle way between the realist policy and the policy of the League, but in reality it was an attempt by France and England



to safeguard their own peace at the expense of their obligations and by the sacrifice of Spain. The result of this policy is plain after eighteen months' trial; never was peace so precarious, nor the danger of war so imminent and horrifying. The ultimate result of non-intervention may very well be the overthrow of the present balance in the Mediterranean, which would prove fatal to France and Britain. France runs the risk of encirclement on her third frontier and the cutting of her communications with North Africa; Great Britain of having the western gates of the Mediterranean closed against her—altogether a fine result of the policy of seeking one's own peace without too much concern about the peace and the rights of one's neighbour.!

But this is not all; the Spanish war has had its repercussions in the Far East. Japan takes advantage of the European deadlock to make war on China, with the obvious intention of more or less transforming that country into a Japanese protectorate. This time, even if the Powers had genuinely desired it, it was going to be extremely difficult to pursue a policy any more in accordance with the principles of the League than that of the Brussels Conference, which, even in its outward forms, barely attempted to conform to these principles. First, Japan being no longer a member of the League, the latter was not disposed to bring pressure to bear on her by means of diplomatic measures, and so rouse public opinion, as in the case of the first war between China and Japan; secondly, the solidarity of the remaining members of the League had been so much weakened by previous encounters that none of them dreamt of attempting to obtain even such an agreement as that which led to the sanctions against Italy. The general feeling among Great and small Powers is that henceforth each must seek its own salvation by increasing its armaments and its alliances, and without involving itself in any issue which might place it in opposition to a stronger Power.

The world is at present in the thrall of universal fear. Everyone is afraid, and this terror increasingly emphasizes the fact that the solidarity of the pacific nations has disappeared, and that independence is guaranteed by force of arms alone. Now it is clear that France, Great Britain, and the United States, by reason of their status and power, are the only nations in a position to make an effective effort to re-establish this solidarity



which is the essential basis of reasonable confidence between nations and of a sufficiently stable international balance. But these Great Powers have not so far given the slightest indication of wishing to produce a policy capable of reacting in no uncertain manner against the present grievous state of international anarchy. Absorbed as they are in the avoidance of all immediate risks, their abortive attempts at a policy of "solidarity" only serve to discredit it. For, as soon as this policy seems likely to involve them in a conflict which touches their own interests too closely, they hasten to abandon it, and leave to their fate the weaker States, whom they have often incited to resistance by promises of help. They do not cease to proclaim the sanctity of treaties, but do nothing which might involve the smallest sacrifice to themselves in order to make these treaties respected. The feeling of insecurity increases continually among the nations, and with it the mistrust and fear which are the immediate causes of war—indeed, I would say, are, as it were, the symptoms of a war which has virtually begun.

The first war in Manchuria brought about the Abyssinian war; the latter provoked the war in Spain, and the Spanish war the second conflict between China and Japan. No one knows where this unhappy chain of events will end. After Japan and Italy, will it not be Germany's turn? Wars beget wars, and one of the causes of the present number of conflicts is the policy followed by France and Great Britain with the best intentions, but with methods so ineffective that they are bound to produce a result which will be the exact opposite of what is desired.



## THE TWILIGHT OF COMINTERN.

BY E. H. CARR.

**T**IME brings its revenge quickly these days in international politics. Even the phraseology of the "anti-Comintern pact" concluded by Germany and Japan in November, 1936 and recently acceded to by Italy, has a curiously hackneyed ring.

"Recognising that the aim of the Communist International, known as Comintern, is to disintegrate and subdue existing States by all the means at its command.

"Convinced that the toleration of interference by the Communist International in the internal affairs of the nations not only endangers their internal peace and social well-being, but is also a menace to the peace of the world.

"Desirous of co-operating in the defence against Communist subversive activities. . . ."

Asked in a general knowledge paper to give their date and authorship of these words, some of us might have made the wrong guess and assigned them to the great days of the Paris Peace Conference and the Supreme Council—the days of the *cordon sanitaire*, the anti-Bolshevik front, and the help given by the Allied and Associated Powers to Kolchak, Denikin, and Yudenich—"Bolshevik imperialism does not merely menace the States on Russia's borders. It threatens the whole of Asia, it is as near to America as it is to France." That, at any rate, can surely be spotted as an excerpt from one of Dr. Goebbels' wilder lucubrations? No, as a matter of fact, it comes from a paper written by Mr. Lloyd George and circulated to his colleagues at the Peace Conference on March 25th, 1919. Mr. Churchill, in those days, did still better. But it would be unkind to quote—unkind, in particular, to Dr. Goebbels, whose more recent denunciations of international Communism would look milk-and-watery by comparison.

What then is this portentous bogey, which in 1919, terrified the statesmen of the victorious Allied Powers and, nearly twenty



years later, still appears to terrify some of the strongest military Powers of Europe and Asia? Its outward embodiment is the Third or Communist International ("Comintern" for short)—the central organization of Communist parties throughout the world—which has its seat in Moscow, which was founded by Lenin in March 1919, and whose present Secretary-General is, significantly enough, Georgi Dimitrov, the hero of the German Reichstag fire trial.

In the visions and the policies of the first Bolshevik leaders, Comintern occupied a leading place. The glorious revolution of November, 1917, was only accidentally, so to speak, a Russian revolution. By its makers it was regarded merely as a first instalment of the world-revolution of the proletariat and of the oppressed peoples everywhere. None of them believed that the Russian revolution would stop at the Russian frontier or that, if it did, it could be permanently successful in Russia itself. "There can be no doubt," said Lenin in 1918, "that if our revolution remains alone, if there are no revolutionary movements, in other countries, our position will be hopeless. . . . Under all conceivable vicissitudes, if the German revolution does not come, we are doomed." The stern dictates of self-interest, as well as of the Marxist faith, impelled Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev to become missionaries of world-revolution; for they believed that its advent was a condition of their own survival. The function of Comintern was to hasten world-revolution by the supply of cash and counsel to Communist organizations throughout the world. It was the most important and effective instrument in the armoury of Bolshevism.

Every year from 1919 to 1924 Comintern held its annual congress in Moscow, and passed resolutions denouncing capitalists, exploiters and imperialists. Nothing was too great and nothing too small to be exempt from its attacks. At one moment it was denouncing the "maniac financiers of America who exploit twelve million negroes," and demanding the national emancipation of the black race. At another it was arraigning Zionism for having "delivered over the native Arab working-class population of Palestine to exploitation by Great Britain." But its main objectives were two: Germany, and British imperialism in Asia. In these fields, Comintern's most skilful



agitators were employed, and Comintern's funds most lavishly expended. Between 1919 and 1923, Radek, then secretary of Comintern, was a constant traveller to Germany, and Zinoviev, its president, appeared there more than once. Hindus, Afghans, Persians and Arabs were honoured visitors in Moscow, and received at Comintern headquarters the latest hints about the conduct of revolution, particularly when directed against British imperialism. In 1920, there was a congress of Eastern peoples at Baku attended by nearly two thousand delegates of thirty-seven nationalities, "a museum of Oriental costumes, a Babel of tongues." Louis Fischer picturesquely describes how Zinoviev, in a speech which went on till well after midnight, summoned the congress to "a Holy War against British imperialism," and how his hearers rose cheering to their feet and, brandishing "studded daggers," "Damascan swords" and even revolvers, swore a mighty oath to lead the crusade.

But this high noon of Comintern's activities soon lost its fiery splendour. Neither of Lenin's predicted alternatives was fulfilled. The revolution neither conquered the world nor was defeated at home. A new situation had arisen. The Soviet Union was surely and slowly establishing itself as a State, and entering into relations, commercial and diplomatic, with the capitalist countries around it. The policy of world-revolution began to reveal itself not only as a failure, but as an embarrassment to the Soviet state. Events in Germany clearly shewed that, if there was to be a revolution there, it would be a revolution not from the Left, but from the Right. Great Britain grew restive under the incessant flow of Comintern propaganda in Asia. In 1923, the so-called "Curzon ultimatum" offered the Soviet Government the choice between the cessation of this propaganda and the cancellation of the profitable Trade Agreement with Great Britain. In the following year there was the disagreeable episode of the "Zinoviev letter." It became more and more obvious to the Bolshevik leaders that they must make their choice between Comintern and world-revolution on the one hand, and friendship with the great capitalist Powers on the other. The two policies could no longer run in double harness.

When the fifth annual congress of Comintern assembled in Moscow in the summer of 1924—the year of Lenin's death—it



would have taken a bold man to predict that twilight was about to descend on this powerful and dreaded organization, and that, during the whole of the next decade, it would hold only one further congress. But this is what happened. The death of Lenin was followed by a clash of two policies and two personalities. Trotsky hoisted the tattered flag of Comintern and world-revolution, Stalin the more genteel and less minatory banner of "socialism in a single State." During the next three years everything went badly for Comintern. In Great Britain the general strike, in spite (or perhaps because) of vigorous encouragement from Moscow, was a fiasco. In China, the intervention of Comintern under Borodin's astute guidance ended in a still more resounding disaster. Trotsky, discredited and outmanœuvred, was expelled from the Party (and eventually from the Soviet Union).

In 1928 Comintern, which for four years had shunned the publicity of a congress, once more assembled in order to expel its Trotskyists and swear allegiance to the new dictator. The familiar slogans were once more shouted from the tribune. But the shadows were gathering fast. It was a gloomy and unconvincing ceremony. The old Comintern had, in fact, met to commit hara-kiri, for the greater glory of Stalin, on the altar of the Five Year Plan. Normal and undisturbed relations with the capitalist world were an essential part of the Soviet scheme of economic construction. The Soviet Union was rapidly becoming respectable. Soviet diplomats began to put on top hats; and Litvinov had already made his first journey to Geneva. World-revolution was not only a nuisance, but (if anyone had any longer believed in it) a danger. Discreet darkness enveloped Comintern and all its works. Anyone tactless enough to mention its name at the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in Moscow was made to feel like a man who has asked for Messrs. Marks and Spencer in Bond Street or enquired in Savile Row for the nearest branch of the Fifty Shilling Tailors. Memories in the Soviet Union are conveniently and mercifully short. A few years elapsed, and Stalin could assure an American journalist that anyone who imagined that the Soviet Union had ever supported the cause of world-revolution was the victim of a "tragi-comic misunderstanding."



There matters stood when, suddenly and unexpectedly, Comintern staged a dramatic (one might perhaps have borrowed the word "tragi-comic") come-back. The person responsible for its resurrection was Herr Hitler. It was somewhere about 1924 that the Bolshevik leaders had decided to jettison an ideological foreign policy based on Communism and world-revolution. Just ten years later, Herr Hitler in the first flush of a victorious revolution introduced another ideological foreign policy based on anti-Communism. In so doing, he provoked the obvious reaction. Early in 1934 Dimitrov, fresh from a German prison and from his triumphant acquittal by a German court, arrived in Moscow and was appointed Secretary-General of Comintern. It was the first time for years that Comintern had been front page news. But few people understood the significance of the event; and it was widely assumed that a dignified sinecure had been found for a distinguished, but perhaps embarrassing, guest. This proved to be not at all the case. Herr Hitler's challenge had been met. Comintern was resuscitated to serve as the spear-head of anti-German propaganda throughout the world; and its titular head was the man known everywhere for his heroic resistance to the worst indignities of National Socialism. It was a brilliant move. Comintern, from being a thorn in the side of Soviet foreign policy, might be turned into its most valuable asset. Preparations went forward; and a congress of Comintern, the seventh in number—and the first for seven years—met in Moscow in August, 1935.

The works of Marx, like the Bible and the works of Dickens, can easily be made to supply a text for every day in the year. The text selected by Dimitrov in his opening speech to serve as the key-note for the proceedings of the seventh congress was extracted from one of Marx's private letters: "We must take things as we find them. We must utilize revolutionary sentiments in a manner corresponding to changed circumstances." The changed circumstances were numerous, and the necessity for adaptation correspondingly great. Soviet Russia was now a member of the League of Nations, hitherto scorned as an organization of predatory capitalists. France, arraigned by Stalin only a few years ago as "the most militarist of all militarist



states," was now Soviet Russia's ally. French socialists and British Labourites, formerly dubbed "social-patriots" or "social-chauvinists" and denounced as the worst enemies of the working-class, must now be enrolled as stalwarts of the anti-Fascist front. *Bourgeois* democracy, once the target for some of Marx's and Lenin's most vituperative sallies, must be hailed as a bulwark against Fascism. Above all, imperialist Governments whose help might one day be needed must be reassured and placated. It was a stiff dose. But it had to be swallowed; and the organizers of Comintern were equal to the task.

The slogan which veiled this right-about-turn, and rallied all discordant elements, was the "fight against Fascism." On the platform of Comintern's seventh congress the word capitalism was scarcely pronounced. (After all, we are all capitalists nowadays in one way or another). The word "imperialism" was heard often enough, but was reserved almost exclusively for Germany, Italy and Japan. The wrongs of the negroes of America and the Arabs of Palestine were unwept and unsung. The nearest approach to one of the old-style thunderings against British imperialism was a speech from an irrepressible Irishman, who denounced Mr. de Valera for luke-warmness in his struggle against British domination. Fascism was the burden of every utterance and every resolution. For every other kind of "ism," Comintern had developed a new and refreshing toleration. All things work together for righteousness to them that hate Fascism.

The true inwardness of the change would have been patent enough, even without a monster resolution proposed by the principal Russian delegate Manuilsky. (Stalin is a member of the Executive Committee and was present at the Congress, but does not play a conspicuous rôle in the affairs of Comintern). But Manuilsky is a heavy-footed person—and was determined that nobody should have any excuse for not understanding. His resolution (which was, of course, like everything else, carried by acclamation) declared that it was the "first duty" of all Communists "to help with all their might and by all means to strengthen the U.S.S.R." It embroidered this theme over nearly a page of print, and ended triumphantly as follows :



Assistance to the U.S.S.R., defence of the U.S.S.R., and co-operation in bringing about its victory over all its enemies must therefore determine the actions of every revolutionary organization of the proletariat, of every genuine revolutionary, of every Socialist, Communist, non-party worker, toiling peasant, of every honest intellectual and democrat, of each and everyone who desires the overthrow of exploitation, Fascism and imperialist oppression, and deliverance from imperialist war, who desires that there should exist brotherhood and peace among nations, that Socialism should triumph throughout the world.

The cat was out of the bag—if it had ever been in it. The purpose for which Comintern had been allowed to emerge from its latter-day twilight into the full glare of the press cameras was unmistakeably revealed. The Communist, the Socialist, the non-party worker, the honest intellectual, the democrat and the rest were all to climb on to the band-wagon of Soviet foreign policy, and shout for the League of Nations and the anti-Fascist *bloc*. The wheel had come full circle. Once upon a time, the Soviet Government had been merely a fore-runner of the coming world-revolution sponsored by Comintern. Now, Comintern dances to the tune called by the directors of Soviet foreign policy, which is not less opportunistic than that of any capitalist State. Since 1935, Comintern has been no more than a branch of the Soviet Government's propaganda department.

This development need not displease the foreign observer whose interest in the Soviet Union is mainly concerned with the repercussions of its policy on his own country; for, as long as Soviet policy remains mild and unaggressive, so long will the once dreaded Comintern be mild and unaggressive too. But what has been the effect of the metamorphosis on Comintern itself? Here the shadows are extraordinarily difficult to penetrate. Zinoviev, whose name is so indissolubly associated with the great days of Comintern, has gone. Radek, one of its earliest and most active missionaries, is in eclipse—probably for ever. During the past two years there have been mass arrests of foreign Communists in Moscow, men who may be supposed to have resisted this diversion of Comintern from an international to a national purpose. Bela Kun, maker of the only successful Bolshevik revolution in Europe outside Russia, and more recently a big figure in Comintern, has been consigned to a prison cell, and presumably faces the grim choice between



a firing-party and the Arctic Circle. Stalin has avenged the Hungarian "Whites." The headquarters of Comintern are now staffed by representatives, or obedient servants, of the new bureaucracy—a change which fittingly corresponds to its altered function. Even Dimitrov cannot feel too comfortable; for if some fresh turn in Soviet policy made it inconvenient to have so doughty an enemy of National Socialism in so conspicuous a position, he might easily be given an opportunity to compare the cells of the G.P.U. with the cells of the Gestapo.

The effect of the change abroad has, of course, been still more striking. Having entered the service of the Soviet Government, Comintern has ceased to be the agent, and has become (except in Germany, Italy and Japan) the opponent, of revolution. In France, the Communists are no longer the party of the extreme Left. Since M. Laval's visit to Moscow in 1935, the French Communists have abandoned completely the traditional Left policy of opposing military expenditure. In the "Popular Front" Government of M. Blum, they have always shouted the loudest and, in practice, always stood for compromise and moderation. "*Nous voulons une France libre, forte et heureuse,*" was the irreproachably *bourgeois* slogan of the French Communists at the 1936 election. They have accepted with complete docility the fall of the Blum Government and the deflationary measures of M. Bonnet. No French Government to-day, however far to the Right, need fear Communist opposition on the score of its domestic policy. It is only if there were a movement to abandon the Franco-Soviet Pact, or seek a rapprochement with Herr Hitler, that Communism in France might again become a revolutionary force. In China, *mutatis mutandis* the same situation prevails. Prior to 1935, local Communist governments controlled many areas of Central China and were a constant thorn in the side of Chiang Kai-Shek, the dictator of Nanking. During the last two years they have all been dissolved on the orders of Comintern in order to strengthen Chiang's hand against Japan. The motive of serving Soviet foreign policy is once more apparent. For the pure international Communist believes with Marx that the worker has no fatherland; and to such a one there can be little to choose between the



ruthless Japanese militarist and the ruthless Chinese dictator (who, incidentally, began his career by wholesale arrests and executions of Communists).

In Great Britain the situation is peculiar for two reasons. In the first place, the chances of revolution are so remote that those who profess and call themselves Communists can indulge in the luxury of revolutionary propaganda without the risk of its having any serious effect. In the second place, the British Communist Party to-day is no longer the puny and poverty-stricken organization, dependent on Moscow both for funds and for leaders, of ten, or even five, years ago. Some of its most active members are drawn from the universities, from literary circles and from the civil service. Many of them enjoy incomes of *bourgeois* dimensions; a few, perhaps, are really well off. The British Communist Party at the present time must be financially self-supporting—if not more. It has acquired a certain limited right to think for itself on matters of secondary importance. British Communists supported the bus strike against the Trade Union leaders last May, though no word of encouragement issued from Comintern headquarters in Moscow, and the subject was all but ignored in the Russian press. British Communists still conduct some rather ineffective propaganda in India, though Moscow remains extremely sensitive to any suggestion of action tending to disrupt the British Empire. Such minor divergencies can be allowed (like the divergence between the Vatican and English Catholics over the Italo-Abyssinian War), provided they do not touch on vital matters of doctrine, and so long as no external danger threatens. But for all this show of independence, the British Communist Party is no longer really revolutionary. It does not stand nearly so far to the Left as Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Maxton, and has no truck with anti-militarism in any shape or form. The University O.T.C.'s, once a favourite Aunt Sally of the Left, are now extensively manned by Communists. The British Communist will foam at the mouth, like any imperialist, at the mere suggestion that British colonies should be handed over to Herr Hitler. Altogether, he is rapidly becoming a sound patriotic Englishman, who hates nobody but Fascists, and whose heart (however rude his tongue) is in the right place.

But Spain has been, for a year past, the great testing-ground of Comintern's policy. And here, too, events have revealed Comintern as an anti-revolutionary rather than a revolutionary force. Much fun has been poked at speakers of the Left for their insistence on the duty of supporting a legally constituted government. But this is no more than a sharp debating-point. The interesting thing is that, among the upholders of the Republican Government in Spain, Comintern has stood on the extreme Right and has consistently helped to stifle every revolutionary movement. In the first days of the civil war, revolutionary committees and a revolutionary militia sprang into being. There were executions, sacking of churches, confiscation of property, nationalization of industries. The leaders were Anarchists, and local Communists (most of whom inclined to Trotskyism rather than to the orthodoxy of Moscow). But from the first moment of Soviet (or, which comes to the same thing, Comintern) intervention, there was a radical transformation. The suppliers of tanks, machine-guns and engineers were in a position to dictate their conditions; and the first condition was the suppression of Anarchists, Trotskyists, and all others engaged in the promotion of revolutionary activities. There were moments when Comintern seemed not less interested in this aspect of the struggle than in the battles against Franco. It was only in Barcelona that the revolutionaries offered serious resistance; and here they were beaten last May (though how decisively has never been quite clear) in some desperate street-fighting—a civil war within a civil war. If Comintern and Soviet assistance saves the Republican Government in Spain, it will not be a government of the Left which emerges from the struggle. It will be something in the nature of a *petit bourgeois* dictatorship, which will have delivered Spain not only from the "reactionaries" of the Right, but from the "revolutionaries" of the Left. A revolutionary Spain would be almost as detrimental to the interests of Soviet foreign policy as a Spain united under Italian and German influence. The equivocal line followed by Comintern is a direct reflexion of the embarrassments of the Soviet Government in this disastrous affair.

And this brings us back to our starting-point. What is the reality behind the fear of "international Communism" so



liberally expressed by German, Italian and Japanese politicians—the fear which has professedly inspired the famous “anti-Comintern pact?” The question is one of psychology as well as of politics. Both in Germany and in Japan, the “Communist danger” may once have been real. In Germany, at any rate, Comintern and its agents were once a live force. It is probable that in Germany and in Japan to-day a good many people are haunted by those nightmare visions of saving the world from Bolshevism which in 1919-1920 disturbed the sleep of Allied statesmen, and prompted the preposterous policy of supporting the military adventures of the “Whites.” It seems likely that Herr Hitler himself is one of them. It is a mistake to deny so much sincerity to the makers of the anti-Comintern pact.

But this is certainly not the whole truth. There are plenty of astute politicians in Germany, Japan and Italy who know the sad reality about Comintern. For them the whole business is one of calculation. If Comintern can be used by one side to inculcate in its adherents the duty of “helping the U.S.S.R. with all their might,” then it can be used by the other side to frighten those circles in which the phobia of Communism has become endemic. It is true that the student with a reflective turn of mind will be unable to discover any reason either why the believer in Communism should support the policy of the Soviet Union or why the opponent of Communism should support the policy of the “anti-Comintern” Powers; for there is no more ground for supposing that the former policy will promote Communism than that the latter will discourage it. But international politics are not controlled by students; and no political phenomenon is more familiar than that of a slogan which retains its power long after the reality to which it once corresponded has ceased to exist. Yet for those who remember the heroic days of the Comintern, there is something rather pathetic about its decline. To-day, Comintern is nothing but a convenient bait for one political group, and an equally convenient bugbear for another. It can be adequately described only in terms of parody. To-day, Comintern is neither Communist nor international: it is merely the ghost of world-revolution flitting uneasily in the twilight round the tomb of Lenin in the Red Square.

## AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS AND THE PUBLIC

BY W. T. WELLS

WITH the passing into law of the Air-Raid Precautions Act the subject of protecting the civil population, and public and private property, from air raids, enters upon a new phase. The public mind, and with it official activities, have in the past reflected three fairly well-defined attitudes. There was a phase, which lasted broadly up to 1933, when the prevailing attitude was that air raids were "unthinkable." The opinion held, somewhat vaguely, was that air raids would be vastly more terrible than in 1914—1918; that in any future war clouds of poison gas would descend upon a helpless populace at the same time as a devastating hail of high-explosives; and that from a self-respecting air raid the number of survivors would be simply *nil*. But the more men magnified the horrors of the air raid, the less, by way of compensation, they anticipated the likelihood of War, and in the main they were content to quiet their fears by repeating, as a sort of magic incantation, that "it can't happen here." This fool's Paradise was roughly broken up when Herr Hitler became *Reichskanzler*. Mr. Baldwin told the House of Commons that the bomber would always get through; Mr. Beverley Nichols wrote *Cry Havoc*—and tried on a gas mask. The tendency in this second phase was to believe that when war came, it would bring in its trail a second Black Death; half the population would perish, while for those who from mere chance, or because they lived in a district which was too unimportant to attract the bomber, were fortunate enough to survive, life would be, in the words of Hobbes, "nasty, brutish, solitary and short." Happily, war still did not appear imminent; undergraduates and other persons who concerned themselves with public affairs were prone to adopt a philosophy of eat, drink and be merry—for the day after to-morrow we shall, probably, die. And wise



men occupied their attention with the revival of the Stock Markets.

This second phase was short-lived : in 1935 the Germans adopted conscription and the Italians invaded Abyssinia. With the prospect of a war in which this country was involved becoming near and immediate, interest in the dangers to be faced assumed a more concrete form, which found expression, a little before the invasion of Abyssinia, in the foundation of the Air Raid Precautions Department of the Home Office. Scepticism about the results which this could achieve was profound. It was said that the steps which the Government were taking were mere political window-dressing ; and that the problem of the air raid was, and would in all probability remain, insoluble. With the passing of the Air Raid Precautions Act it now becomes the duty of certain local authorities to prepare schemes for submission to the Home Secretary ; and a nation-wide attempt is being made to enlist the sympathy and support of the public. The latter is half-way between a mood of scepticism and a mood of active interest. It is, therefore, particularly appropriate to the present time to enquire how far air raid precautions are capable of saving life and protecting property, what steps have been taken up till now to organize them, and also on what lines the organization should proceed in order to obtain the best possible results in the future.

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The first object of air raid precautions is to prevent panic. If they succeed in this, and fail in everything else, they have yet justified themselves : panic inevitably causes casualties. There is a story of a factory, where over seven hundred people worked, to illustrate this. In the first daylight raid over London in the Great War, the workers, mostly girls, naturally enough did not know where to go or what to do ; they lost their heads, rushed wildly about, and, although not a single bomb hit the building, over seventy people, who had fainted or were knocked over, and were crushed, had to be taken to hospital. The managing director, to prevent this happening again, evolved a scheme by which each member of the staff knew, in the event of an alarm, where to go and how to get there. There was no shelter, properly speaking, but the mere fact of having something

definite to do prevented any recurrence of panic in later raids. If every member of the population knows, as a result of the schemes to be introduced, what he must do in an emergency, much will have been achieved.

Before it is possible to see how much can be done by way of air raid precautions to protect that part of the civil population which is actually attacked, as distinct from that part of it which only anticipates attack, it is necessary to examine the various types of danger against which it is necessary to guard. They are, broadly, the high-explosive bomb, the incendiary bomb, the machine-gun, and gas; which last can either be dropped in a bomb, or sprayed in liquid form from the air. It may be said, in parenthesis, that anti-aircraft fire, whatever its limitations, should be able to prevent raiders from flying low enough to fire machine-guns at the population or to spray it with gas which will remain of sufficiently high concentration to be serious in its effects. The serious problems to be considered are, then, the high-explosive bomb, the incendiary bomb, and the gas bomb.

A recent experiment showed that the simple precaution of shutting all doors and windows would prevent gases from entering a house in serious quantities for 7 or 8 minutes, when the bombs dropped near the house and a strong wind was blowing towards it. When it is taken into account that no raid is likely to occur without a warning of about the same duration, it will be seen that every household should have a quarter of an hour in which to make preparations against an intensive gas attack. The modern respirator will afford complete protection against all except the blister gases, and much will depend on the efficiency of the arrangements for distributing respirators. It is of some interest that this problem is engaging the attention of the authorities at Southampton, where probably the most nearly complete scheme in the country is in being; and its solution is part of their programme for 1938. But the availability of respirators does not remove the need of the gas-proof room. No respirator has yet been made which is satisfactory for the use of children under three years old. And the respirator will not, in any case, suffice to protect its wearer from the blister gases, Lewisite and mustard gas. It is,



therefore, of paramount importance that the whole population should be instructed in the preparation of the gas-proof room. It is not officially considered necessary to make protective clothing against the blister-gases available for the whole population, but in view of the possibility of having to leave the gas-proof room it would seem desirable at least to encourage people to lay in a stock of oilskin clothes and rubber boots against an emergency. Whatever remains to be done to perfect the organization, it does at least seem clear that the protection of the public against gas is a problem which is capable of solution.

The incendiary bomb is often viewed as the greatest danger of all to the civilian population, largely because it can be carried in such numbers that every aeroplane is, in theory, able to start a great number of fires. In practice, even in the most thickly built areas, a high proportion of the bombs is certain to drop on roads or in back-yards, where they will do little harm ; and even if a bomb hits a roof, if the angle of the roof is steep the bomb is very likely to be deflected and to fall harmlessly on to the ground. And four inches of concrete in the roof will afford complete protection. In Spain, at any rate, the incendiary bomb does not seem to have been a great success. When successful, its normal course is to pierce the roof and to explode on the top floor. Sir Samuel Hoare's suggestion, that the best way of dealing with it was with the help of a bucket of sand and a shovel, has received a certain amount of ridicule which it does not deserve. The experience of the Air Raid Precautions Exercise at Southampton last July, in which twenty-seven civilians, who had received training which did not extend beyond a single day, were completely successful in extinguishing fires caused by incendiary bombs, suggests that with training, vigilance and the active co-operation of Fire Brigades, the danger of fire by incendiary bombs can be kept within manageable limits.

The problem most difficult of solution is, of course, the high-explosive bomb : indeed, unless some means is devised of keeping the bomber away from the crowded centres of population, it is clearly incapable of a wholly satisfactory solution. It is necessary to take what consolation one may from the

limitations of the numbers of high-explosive bombs which bombers can carry ; while the fate of Guernica shows what can be done by high-explosive bombs, it would be impossible to mete out the same treatment to a large town ; and it may be hoped that our anti-aircraft defences will be sufficiently formidable to prevent bombers from flying so low as did the Germans over Guernica. While the provision, on a large scale, of shelters against direct hits seems to be out of the question, the aim of air raid precautions must be to minimize the damage done by each hit. The provision of shelter against splinters, the need of which was emphasized in an article entitled "Gas and Gulls," published in last June's issue of this REVIEW, will no doubt be one feature of the schemes to be submitted to the Home Secretary.

Another question causing much discussion is that of evacuation. The difficulties in the way of a large-scale evacuation of population are, clearly, immense. To what destination are people to be sent ? How, in the extreme pressure on transport inevitable in the early days of a war, are they to be sent there ? How are they to be fed and housed ? If they create conditions of congestion outside the capital, or any other large city from which they are sent, will they not merely create dangers in a different place ? Above all, how is the work of office and factory, as essential in war as in peace, to be carried on if the workers are away ? These questions must all be faced ; but they do not affect, at any rate to a large extent, the evacuation of special classes of persons. The Board of Education recommends the evacuation of children to small centres of population in the county, or even to small camps, and the working out of schemes on these lines would be of the utmost value ; and expectant and nursing mothers should also be evacuated.

For those who are not evacuated, there will be nothing to do but to face the danger of a direct hit by high explosives, and to do their best to minimize other dangers by helping the Air Raid Precautions organizations to the best of their ability. Professor J. B. S. Haldane, in a recent article in the *Daily Express*, attacked one argument which has been much used by those who belittle the value of air raid precautions ; namely that they can be helpful against gas alone, or against incendiary



bombs alone, but that they are necessarily useless when people are driven from their gas-proof rooms by fires spread by the incendiaries, or when the attack by gas-bombs follows the evacuation of dwellings necessitated by fires. Fire, he pointed out, is a natural antidote to gas, in that it will draw gas up into the atmosphere ; and while this argument would not apply to a district whose houses had been attacked by fire some hours before the gas attack, it should be possible to deal effectively with this situation also. In houses which were not badly affected by fire, planks or cardboard could be substituted where window-panes were broken—an improvisation which would meet the case when windows were broken as a result of a near-by explosion. The occupants of houses where there was not a room in the ground floor or basement intact should be shepherded to public shelters.

It is impossible to estimate the potentialities of Air Raid Precautions without considering the strain which is likely to be imposed on the organization : in other words, " passive defence," merely a part of the whole, which is completed by the pursuit aeroplane the balloon barrage and the anti-aircraft gun. But if we assume a continuance of the present superiority of the attack over the defence in this respect, it is reasonable to envisage a prospect, grim indeed, but, if met by proper organization, not amounting to the danger of the annihilation of the population or of widespread anarchy.

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To what extent does an adequate organization exist to-day ? The Air Raid Precautions Act itself does something to answer this question. The imposition on the councils of counties and county boroughs of the duty to submit schemes indicates that the schemes themselves do not exist. That is the logical answer to the question, but owing to the English method of building organizations by trial and error, it is, happily not the whole truth. There are numerous schemes in hand, and several tests have been carried out of their working. First in the field is Southampton, a county borough, whose port makes the protection of the population and the maintenance of the essential services a matter of national interest.

The organization which has been evolved at Southampton under the hand of its Air Raid Precautions Officer, Captain

F. J. Phillips, was the subject of an article by the present writer published in *The Spectator* on the 7th of January of this year. Its central features are: the maintenance of the essential services by means of the existing departments of the municipal administration and by public utilities such as the Gas Company; the enrolment of wardens; the organization of a system of Wardens' Posts in which there is to be one Post to every five hundred inhabitants, each Post to be manned by three wardens and one Boy Scout runner; similar systems of Fire Posts and First Aid Posts; the distribution of information from an Intelligence Centre and the co-ordination of all activities from an Operational Room by the Mayor, the Town Clerk and the Air Raid Precautions Officer. The whole organization is voluntary, every volunteer has received or is to receive anti-gas training, and in course of time it is hoped to give full instruction to the public both in anti-gas measures and in the steps necessary to extinguish incendiary bombs. In particular, it is hoped that every business house will organize a scheme of its own, and an important part of the Air Raid Precautions Officer's work consists of giving lectures to the staffs of factories and shops. The scheme was tried out in two wards in an exercise last July, the results of which were both interesting and satisfactory. One notable feature was the successful extinction of incendiary bombs, referred to above.

In the creation of a new type of organization to meet a new emergency it is necessarily "*le premier pas qui coûte.*" The fact that a working model is available at Southampton should greatly accelerate the preparation of schemes in other parts of the country, though naturally each locality has its own special problems. The Act provides that whereas (apart from London) counties and county boroughs have to prepare air raid general precautions schemes, all boroughs and urban district councils have to prepare air raid *fire* precaution schemes; but the latter types of authority may apply to the Home Secretary to submit general schemes of their own. These provisions will inevitably lead to some contention between county councils and non-county boroughs, and it will be of interest to the student of local government and human nature to see whether love of economy or love of autonomy will predominate; but they will,



unfortunately, be a cause of delay as well as of amusement. And where different authorities are responsible for the general schemes and the fire schemes, the difficulties of co-ordination are obvious.

The removal of the obstacle to progress imposed by the differences on finance between the Government and the local authorities has not, unfortunately, eliminated every possibility of delay. And, granted all the difficulties of setting into motion a new organization, of deciding which are to be the respective spheres of the Government and local authorities for its purposes, it cannot be said to be satisfactory that after the Air-Raids Precautions Department of the Home Office has been in existence for nearly three years, we should be so much at the beginning of things as we now are. Much technical progress has been made: full credit must be given for the Anti-Gas School at Falfield and for the steady progress in the production of respirators for the civil population. But the development of organization is at least a year behind the development of technique, and, though it is difficult to find any positive evidence of this, it would seem that the "staff" side of the Air-Raid Precautions Department may have been a little apt to apply the military mind to what is, in essence, a problem of local government, comparable with the work of the Ministry of Health rather than with that of the Defence Departments.

Provided that no emergency occurs during the next year or so, the previous delay may not be material; but it is essential that the organization should be built on foundations which are sound. More than this, the foundations must be such that the public believes in them and understands them. If technique is a year ahead of organization, organization is at least a year ahead of leadership. It is not that Sir Samuel Hoare and his subordinates are not competent, but that the task ahead of them is second to none in importance and urgency, and that it requires the whole hearted co-operation of the whole of the people. Its ramifications extend to every corner of the political field. An article in *The Spectator* by Mr. Noel Carrington, in pointing out the danger of big blocks of flats and tenements from the air-raid point of view, suggests that our housing policy must be considered in the light of the air menace. Air-raid

wardens are not being recruited from men of under thirty, yet it is difficult to imagine more exacting and strenuous work than they will be called upon to perform, while in an air-raid the place of the father of a family is in his home, taking care of his family; is the reason for the exclusion of men under thirty an old-fashioned notion that they will be required to man trenches in Flanders? If so, it is a conception which requires very careful revision in the light of modern defence problems, as expounded, for instance, by Captain Liddell Hart in his article on "The Defence of the Empire," in the January issue of this REVIEW. How can a Department which ought to consider problems of this scope be efficiently conducted as a mere branch of the Home Office?

The Air Raids Precaution Department should, temporarily at least, be an independent Department with a Minister of Cabinet rank at its head. That Minister must not only be a first-class organizer, but must also have a personality which will attract attention to the Department and its work. Mr. Hore-Belisha's work at the Ministry of Transport and now at the War Office, would make him the obvious choice for the post, were it not that his work at the War Office awaits completion and that he could not possibly fill both offices at the same time. Who else in English public life is of the right calibre? Mr. Lloyd George is too old; and he is in Opposition, as is also Mr. Herbert Morrison. There is one other man suitable, and only one: Mr. Winston Churchill. What an opportunity to crown his political career! "Whoever thought that the air attacks would contribute to shake the will to victory of the English people," wrote the German author Bloem in *Der Weltbrand* "was naïvely mistaken, and did not understand them." It should be made Mr. Churchill's responsibility to persuade the General Staffs of potentially hostile countries not to repeat the mistake.



## THE PROBLEM OF WALES

BY WYN GRIFFITH.

THERE are moments when an Englishman feels that an upland farmer in Wales is a foreigner. Unless the farmer speaks English fluently (for no one expects an Englishman to be a linguist), conversation is restricted to the bare essentials of intercourse : food, weather, and the way to the nearest village. Place names are meaningless, and it is difficult to reconcile the pronunciation with the spelling. The visitor sits in the kitchen drinking a glass of milk and listening to a thin and unsteady trickle of English, while a foreign language is flowing vigorously through the open door of the dairy. A weekly paper printed in Welsh lies on the kitchen table, and he cannot understand a word of it : he turns its pages and finds " Bovril " or " Ford " in the advertisement columns, familiar words in strange company. Wales is a foreign country.

A few hours later our Englishman may be in Cardiff or Llandudno. In the shops and in the streets, everybody speaks English, and to all appearance he is in his own country. Wales is part of the West of England, easy to reach, always a pleasant country for holidaying, and occasionally good for business.

If we superimpose these two pictures—and they reproduce experiences common enough to be taken as representative—we get a composite image of Wales as seen by an Englishman. A land in which he may move quickly from the familiar to the strange, where he may sit in his railway carriage on his way from Chester, reading his newspaper, taking little notice of what is happening in the carriage until he suddenly realizes that his fellow-passengers are all talking Welsh, although they have in their hands copies of the daily paper he himself is reading.

There are flourishing Welsh Societies in all the larger towns in England, large Welsh colonies in such unexpected places as Slough and Luton, thirty-six Welsh Churches and chapels in

London. It is true that there are also numerous centres all over the country where Scotsmen and Irishmen meet for social and other purposes, but in any one of these an Englishman could understand what was being said. He could call himself an observer of regional activities, though the Scots and Irish would not allow such an understatement to pass unchallenged. To a Frenchman, at any rate, this would seem to be a reasonable interpretation of the proceedings.

If our Englishman walked along Charing Cross Road on a Sunday night, or in Mecklenburgh Square on a week-night, he might easily find himself in a throng of ordinary citizens talking Welsh. In Hyde Park, on Sunday night, he can find a large body of young people singing in Welsh, assembled there for the sheer delight of singing their own songs in their own language, knowing that on Monday morning they will be back in their offices and shops and kitchens, back in England again.

What is important, and what distinguishes the Welsh from the other inhabitants of the outlying regions of Great Britain, in the eyes and ears of an Englishman, is their habit of talking in a language he cannot understand: On the Rugby field, in the shops, and in ordinary intercourse, he is near enough to them, but they have a habit of vanishing from his ken and taking refuge in a strange language, in which they conceal their thoughts and feelings.

There are many problems in Wales. Some of them are common to other parts of Great Britain: special areas, the state of agriculture, road and rail communications, wireless reception and rural housing. But the problem of Wales is a problem of language. It is important that this should be realized in England, for it holds the clue to many matters that are now obscure to the majority of English people. Different racial origins and different customs play their part in creating this sense of difference, but for all practical purposes at the present moment, the language question is paramount.

The words of the preamble to the Act of Union are worth repeating, although they are four hundred years old.

"Albeit the Dominion Principality and Country of Wales justly and righteously is, and ever hath been incorporated annexed united and subject and under the Imperial Crown of this Realm as a very Member and Joint of the same . . . yet notwithstanding because in the same Country



Principality and Dominion divers Rights Usages and Customs be far discrepant from the Laws and Customs of this Realm, and also because that the People of the same Dominion have and do daily use a speech nothing like, nor consonant to the natural Mother Tongue used within this Realm, some rude and ignorant People have made distinction and diversity between the King's subjects of this Realm and his Subjects of the said Dominion and Principality of Wales, whereby great Discord Variance Division Murmur and Sedition hath grown between his said Subjects, His Highness" (King Henry VIII.) "therefore of a singular Zeal Love and Favour that he beareth towards his Subjects of his said Dominion of Wales, minding and intending to reduce them to the perfect Order Notice and Knowledge of his Laws of this his Realm, and utterly to extirp all and singular the sinister Usages and Customs differing from the same . . ."

To a Welshman, the mischief began four hundred years ago, in Henry VIII's "Singular Zeal Love and Favour." At that time, Scotland was a hostile kingdom, and Ireland, for the most part, in the hands of the "wild men." But Wales became Henry's seventh wife, with all that that implies.

The Act goes on to say that

"No person or persons that use the Welsh Speech or Language shall have or enjoy any Manner Office or Fees within this Realm of England Wales or other the King's Dominion, upon pain of forfeiting the same Offices or Fees, unless he or they use and exercise the English Speech or Language."

In the witness box or the dock to-day, the "Welsh Speech or Language" has to be translated. And it is difficult to think of any "Office or Fees" a Welshman can have or enjoy unless he uses the "English Speech or Language." As the latest Census figures show that out of the 2,151,374 inhabitants of Wales, 811,329 speak Welsh, and 97,932 do not admit to speaking English, it is clear that there is a considerable number of people who "daily use a speech nothing like nor consonant to the natural Mother Tongue used within this Realm."

Whether Wales (or England, for that matter) gained or lost by the Act of Union is of no importance at present, for the exact nature of the relationship between the two countries in the future will depend upon estimates of favours to come rather than upon computations of benefits obtained in the past. Sooner or later, some kind of union would have been imposed upon Wales, and equally inevitably, a demand for separation would have been created by union. It would be interesting to speculate upon the varying nature of the terms upon which union would have come into force at different times during the last four hundred years, according to the dominant mood of the

dominant partner, but it would be of little use. It is hard to believe that the Welsh language would have been treated with courtesy and consideration at any period. Politically and administratively, two languages are inconvenient, if not actually troublesome, to the governing power. If the non-dominant language has declined sufficiently, it may become a curiosity, worth preserving (within strict limits) as picturesque and quaint, but this is the last stage of decay, the prelude to death and to disinterment by antiquarians. However, Welsh is a living language of great vitality and power of adaptation, and the speech of over eight hundred thousand people cannot be dismissed as a romantic survival, the last faint trace of woad or of Druidism.

If we pause for a moment to take stock, we find that in the West of England there is a nation numbering over two million, of whom nearly a million speak Welsh. Until recent years, the West of England was of no particular importance to anyone but its inhabitants and those who wished to trade with them or to exploit its natural riches. But the aeroplane has now made the West Country strategically important, and the Defence Forces are casting their eyes upon it. Factories, depots, bases . . . it is easy to "lose" a building in this hilly country. There are good harbours, and in certain areas there is a highly-skilled industrial population. If we descend to the level of mere convenience—and this has often proved a starting-point for reform—there is much to be said for giving consideration to a matter exercising the minds of the inhabitants of an area that is strategically important. They are uneasy, suspicious, and even obstructive on this question of language. So long as this is added to their concern about their livelihood, especially in the special areas, they are bound to be bad neighbours.

It is difficult for a Welshman to be dispassionate and judicial on such a topic, but the attempt must be made, for passion is a poor evangelist. First of all, it is desirable to correct some common misunderstandings. There are some who think that Welsh is of no more importance in Wales than Gaelic is in Scotland. According to the 1931 Census, the population of Scotland was 4,842,980, and the population of Wales was 2,151,374. There were 129,419 people in Scotland who spoke



Gaelic, and 811,329 in Wales who spoke Welsh. And while there were 6,716 people in Scotland who spoke Gaelic only, there were 97,932 in Wales who spoke Welsh only. These numbers show that as a matter of practical politics, the language problem in Wales cannot be disposed of by airy references to Gaelic.

Moreover, even in the industrialized county of Glamorgan, with a population of 1,166,998 in 1931, there were 346,244 who spoke Welsh. In North Wales, out of 508,768 people, 236,988 spoke Welsh. Approximately thirty-seven per cent. of the inhabitants of Wales in 1931 were Welsh-speaking. In five out of twelve counties, over eighty per cent of the inhabitants speak Welsh.

The chief lesson to be drawn from these figures is that there is a body of people, spread over the whole of Wales, and over eight hundred thousand strong, who have inherited a language which they wish to preserve and to hand down to the next generation. Until recent years, it would be correct to say that the general attitude of Wales on this question was one of passive resistance to English influence. The degree of resistance varied greatly at different times and in different parts of the country: proximity to England, holiday visitors, and industrial development played their part in determining the strength of the forces opposed to Anglicization.

The post-war years have changed the temper of the country. Motor traffic—and in particular the motor bus—has brought the village to the town, to the English newspapers and to the cinema. Broadcasting has brought the town—the English town—to the country: even to-day, after years of endeavour culminating in the establishment of a Welsh Regional Station, Welsh is broadcast for about one hour only, on the average, out of fourteen programme hours a day. And this hour does not reach many of the people who would welcome it, for they live in the remote mountainous regions where medium-wave reception is uncertain and poor.

These influences were not consciously directed against the Welsh language, but infiltration is often more effective than a frontal attack. Within the last few years, Wales has realized that its language is in danger, and from being mostly instinctive, its resistance to this process of Anglicization has become

conscious. There have been men in all periods who were aware of the danger, and active in their efforts to counter it, but it is not untrue to say that the country as a whole is now alive to the fact that, if the language is to flourish in the future, something must be done to-day. Wales has become conscious of Welsh.

Why do these hundreds of people want to preserve their language? What does it profit them, and in what manner? Is it mere sentimentality? Why do the Welsh wish to remain Welsh? These questions are often asked, but not so frequently answered calmly and dispassionately. It is difficult to improve upon the words of a Departmental Committee of the Board of Education.

"The individuality of a nation is its birthright. War or conquest may obliterate it; an alien culture may overlay it; the unseen processes of history may efface it; immigration may dilute it; and yet it makes a fight for life, and that battle is just. There is no profit in uniformity. For more than eighteen hundred years the Welsh people has maintained its individuality; it withstood the encircling powers of the Romans; it was hardly affected by the inroads of the Teutonic invaders; it was maintained in spite of the armed occupation of Edward I. and the administrative assimilation of Henry VIII. Against the more insidious pressure of English Industry, English Commerce, English visitors, English books, English newspapers" (and, it must now be added, English Broadcasting) "it has maintained a steady resistance . . . The language of a people is the outward expression of its individuality. With the loss of its language some essential part of its character is at least obscured. In the literature of a people are enshrined the traditional habits of thought of a people, the life of its spirit, its aspirations, its visions, its continuous purpose."

These are strong words, but they are an honest statement of opinions strongly held, and they cannot be dismissed as mere prejudice. They reflect an attitude towards language and culture which is entirely reasonable, and they lay emphasis upon the right values, as will at once be admitted in England if "English" be substituted for "Welsh." Why were they written?

"There is no profit in uniformity," but there is convenience, and ease in administration. There is no movement in England to attack the Welsh language, no "Anti-Welsh League." No one plots against it, and the announcement of a meeting in England to bring about its abolition would not fill a parish-hall. It is no use pretending that there is a conspiracy to destroy it, for it does not figure in the list of public enemies. Colonel Blimp has probably never heard it spoken, except at an



International Rugby match, where strange words are sometimes sung.

But there are people to whom it is a nuisance. Administration would be simpler if it did not exist : however, it does exist, and there are matters of greater importance than the simplification of administration. Taking a long view, would it not be better to recognize its existence? Certain Government Departments do so, others do not. As things are now, a Welsh-speaking Welshman (and there are over eight hundred thousand of them) can attend to certain matters in his own language, and he can fill in certain forms with a reasonable chance of understanding them : other matters and other forms he must struggle with in English. There is an immense resistance, none the less powerful for being illogical and unvocal, against any extension of the recognition of the language.

One result of this is that Wales is a discontented neighbour, at a time when there is no lack of economic grounds for unrest and *malaise*. The intellectual leaders of the country are alarmed, and rightly so. They are endeavouring to create a generation that will actively resist the process of Anglicization, and they are determined to save their heritage, even at the cost of separatism. The poets and the prose-writers are turning away from England, although most of them are bilingual and are well aware of the self-sacrifice involved.

There is no inherent reason why this revival of Welsh should be anti-English, any more than it should be anti-French. The language has its own vitality, its own literature, old and new, and it does not require hate for its propagation. All that Wales asks for is fair play and no favour.

If England extended its recognition of a language spoken by over eight hundred thousand people, so that Wales could, if it pleased, manage its affairs in its own language, what would happen? A great deal of the energy now spent in frustration and in the milder forms of obstruction would be available for co-operation. Antagonism, open or latent, would evaporate into an understanding based upon tolerance of differences, and of all forms of nationalism in the present world, this is the wisest and the most practical. The best neighbour is one who keeps his own house in order and works hard to keep down the

weeds in his own garden. If he wishes to run his household in Welsh, why not let him do so ?

The nationalistic spirit is active in Wales to-day. There is a Welsh Nationalist Party, of which much was heard recently when its leaders were sentenced for arson. It is not easy to determine its numerical strength ; as its members are scattered all over the country, it has achieved no glory at the polls, and it appears to be of no importance politically. But it cannot be judged merely by its numbers, nor can it be dismissed as trivial because it does not seem likely to create a parliamentary party in the near future. Part of its political programme seems impracticable to the ordinary voter, too Utopian to be taken seriously. In its championship of the Welsh language, however, it expresses the desires of hundreds of thousands of men and women of all creeds and parties, young and old, rural and urban. If it does not succeed in one direction, it may progress in another : it may concentrate upon non-parliamentary representation, and it is important to remember that any movement which reflects one widespread desire is capable of quick expansion, if it devotes its energies to exploiting this at the expense of its other and less popular aims.

A non-militant nationalism, seeking a way of preserving its culture, untroubled by dreams of expanding beyond its own borders, threatening no one's peace, is rare enough in the world of to-day to merit an attempt to understand it. Behind all the numerous manifestations of Welsh nationality, there lies one conviction, one paramount concern : the language of the country must not be allowed to be overwhelmed, and it must be treated with the consideration and courtesy which its history and its vitality justify. Until this is recognized, there can be no solution to the real "Problem of Wales."



## THE WORKHOUSE

BY J. S. COLLIS

**A**DMISSION is free. It is open to every race and to all sexes. No distinction is made between the rich and the poor, the clever and the stupid, the real and the fake, the industrious and the lazy, the believer and the atheist, the conservative and the rebel—all alike receive the same goods for *nothing*, and the same consideration if they seek assistance from the officials, who seem to take a special pleasure in courteous attention. It is, in my experience, the most perfect example of that English tolerance which delights to welcome "all shades of opinion" and to give "fair play" to the champions of all causes. Whatever a man's aim may be, this gate of truth is thrown open to him so generously and so genuinely that when, for instance, Lenin had finished studying the work of a former reader called Karl Marx, he was in a position to rise from Seat L. 13, leave the library, and stand a whole Empire on its head (from the English point of view) and to cut off the heads of those who did not like that position.

At this Reading Room of the British Museum, it is officially claimed, you can get out any book written by any person in any country in any age. This cannot be true. But the fact remains that any book which you look up in the catalogue (W. B. Yeats said that he had to give up coming to the Museum because these catalogues were too heavy to lift) is nearly always there. The Room is circular. From the balcony it looks like a giant wheel with the readers at their desks for spokes, and the inner circle of catalogues for the hub. Radiating under and outwards from this Wheel That Turns Not Round stretch forty miles of bookshelves—a honeycomb of knowledge, a mine of books. "All shades of opinion are welcomed here:" shades indeed, and ghosts, and apparitions of opinion wandering and reverberating through the everlasting corridors of prose!

It is typical of England that though she cares less for things of the mind than any other civilized nation, she should have erected the best library in the world—(this country is like that in everything). The English themselves do not think much of the place. To them Appearance means everything. They cannot see that what goes on in the Reading Room may be more fundamentally *active* than the proceedings down the street in the House of Commons. They think that in the Beginning is the Act. They will not acknowledge that in the Beginning is the Word. The Word that sows the seed may not be seen. It works underneath the ground, and those who convey it may be clothed in shabbiness and penury. Our deepest desires are put into ideas, our ideas into theories and programmes—until at last the Great Movements advance and are executed well or badly by the M.P.s and the P.M.s who occupy the seats of power. But such transcendentalism is hateful to the English or to the Scottish mind. Even their own mystics gibe at the Museum Library. Edward Carpenter—one of those gracious flowers of English culture envied by all nations—could not avoid his joke at its expense. “What is it, such a library?” he exclaimed. “It is the homage of industrious dullness to the human soul.” And again :

“How lovely!

All the myriad books—well-nigh two millions of volumes—the interminable iron galleries, the forty miles or so of closely-packed shelves ;

The immense catalogue—itsself a small library—of over a thousand volumes ;

The mountain-peaks of literature, and the myriads of lesser hills and shoulders and points—the mole-hills and grass-blades even ;

How lovely!

To think there are all these books—and one need not read them.”

Hence most of the people who make profitable use of the Reading Room are foreigners—the stuffy atmosphere (as he calls it) is too much for the robust, open-the-window Englishman who is content to come and sip from the honeycomb now and then (every eminent man of letters seems to have done this one time or another)—though occasionally a person like Samuel Butler, who routined every hour of his day, makes it into a permanent study. The distinguished *habitués* nearly all come from foreign countries—to which they seldom return. The English *habitués* are extinguished almost as human beings—which is partly due



to the fact that with unsurpassed British thoughtlessness as to the aim of the Library the authorities close it at 6 p.m. just as the authorities of the Church of England, with unsurpassed British thoughtlessness as to the aim of a church, close St. Paul's Cathedral at 6 p.m. lest anyone instead of rushing home should commit the indiscretion of going in to pray.

For some years my own work brought me into intimate touch with this Reading Room, and I confess that I grew very fond of it. I used to reach it in time to secure a seat on the edge of one of the spokes of the wheel so as to have no one on my right—(you never see the man opposite, for a splendid English hedge of wood shields you off from him). There I would often sit all day, sometimes without going out for food. The lack of movement used to make me so chilly that at last, putting my overcoat over my shoulders and half-submerging my head, I probably almost disappeared as a person.

Thus I was able to understand the appeal which this place made to the poor English *habitués*. For them it is a Workhouse—in the sense in which that word is used in England, an asylum, a retreat from the work of the outside world. One day, having gone through the swing-doors into the short corridor leading to the Reading Room, I paused, struck by a figure stooping over the hot-water pipes which at one time were in that passage. He was meagre of body, utterly slighted by Nature; his back almost a hump, his shoulders falling away at a hopeless angle, covered by a grey thin overcoat beyond death itself, trousers with beggary in every fold, as if upheld by no kind of braces creased his legs; a long piece of string dangled from the lining of a pocket; his broken-down hat was well over the forehead and half down the face, while shivering grey hair miserably fell behind. He stood stooping over the pipes, neither moving nor turning his mouse-like face to left or right. I was glad to see him there instead of in a less dignified Workhouse. He was not an exceptional figure. An even greater decay had settled upon another intellectual tramp who once, sitting beside me, rose, went to the shelves and raising his ragged arms addressed the books in half-silent exhortation. These derelict men are a special feature of the library, though all are not quite so overthrown. I took the following note concerning one who had

obviously found his home at last : ' The Reading Room would be unthinkable without him. He is poor, he is faded, he is sadly happy. He comes early, he goes at the last minute. Often he sleeps. Often he stands outside on the steps of the Museum in vague gaze. He is in no haste. He is without purpose ; it is impossible to believe that he is getting anywhere in his studies. Clearly he is lost. From what does he fly ? And when the cruel door closes whither does he go ? Here, at any rate, from nine to six, he is not lost. This is his home, his asylum, his earthly paradise ; for him here there is sure and certain peace ; in this place he will keep watch until he dies—nay, in this harbour he cannot die, for outside it he does not exist ; he shall be found here from generation to generation and from age to age.'

There are more impressive immortals also suspended in this Room. Men who must surely be getting somewhere. I have only known this museum off and on for a trifling fourteen years, but enough perhaps to allow me to appreciate the labours of those permanent students who have been taking notes every day for some forty years. I have never not seen a certain tall, thin, serene, dark man (a foreigner) walk in, turn to the right at the entrance and go to the same chair—he is obviously accomplishing something, his upright carriage and perpetual half-smile reflect his progress. The same is true of the man whom I would call the Colossal Priest. No one has ever not seen him there, summer, winter, autumn, spring. You leave this museum for a long time, you travel into a far country. You return. And there, as if only an hour had passed, is the Great Priest walking in or out of the room. His garments are those of some French ecclesiastical personage. His proportions are elephantine. His extremely large head, crowned with a little cap, looks extremely small on a body that can be second to none in weight. As the years pass he becomes ever more prodigious, his stomach advancing still further to the front. His body divides him from his books by an expanse that might make comfortable reading difficult, but his eyes are good and he sees across the distance. Though sometimes found asleep, his general operations are impressive, he knows what he is doing, and piles his desk high with tier after tier of books. Sooner



or later he will complete a superlative Scholastic work, and at last return to his own country with the mightiest tome the world has ever seen!

Around this drastic presence, this rock of ages, there cling and grow and wither the lesser perennials. In the outside world crisis follows crisis, while away from it all in the Reading Room a small, thin man takes innumerable notes in microscopic note-books until at last he walks with his head bent forward at a shocking angle; while a strange frock-coated gentleman who is unable to work for more than a quarter of an hour at a stretch without getting up and talking to someone, carries out work on Chinese texts; while a negro studies Latin Grammar; while a faded beauty writes a novel; while an old woman reads with her eyes so near the text that her forehead rests on the page.

The more eccentric readers are not so constant in attendance. One seldom sees the man who tried to come in clothed only in a loin-cloth; or the man who went out carrying one of the chairs on his back; or the reader wearing rubber gloves, and with a perforated enamelled mug strapped over his mouth; or the heavily veiled lady who used to raise her veil at intervals to stick a piece of stamp-paper on the end of her nose. But they are not excluded. The British genius in tolerance not only recognizes that eccentricity is necessary to the ultimate harmony of the world, but realizes that if knowledge is thrown open to all, then those who know how to use it will enter the gate. There are not a few such always in that Reading Room, though they may not be the most conspicuous. They possess the secret of how to turn knowledge into power—and because of them this strange place of refuge and labour is for ever justified.

## FRENCH VIEW.

BY PIERRE VIÉNOT.

THERE is one fundamental fact that must be appreciated by the student of French public opinion : the French Press does not reflect the state of mind of the people, and it is impossible to discern the currents and eddies of opinion from the direction taken at any given time by the principal newspapers. Whereas in other democratic countries the Press constitutes normally a fairly accurate mirror of the sentiments of its readers and merely acts as an amplifier, the French Press—or perhaps I should say the Press in Paris—rather fancies itself as possessing a capacity for creating such currents of opinion—and, for a variety of reasons, seeks to do so. Naturally in nine cases out of ten it fails to do anything of the sort.

This phenomenon may be observed constantly in domestic politics, but it is still more patent where the question of foreign policy is concerned. Anyone who is in contact at first-hand with “ the average Frenchman ” can verify my statement. The reader in France looks in his newspaper for facts, but he doesn’t *believe* his newspaper, indeed he is utterly sceptical about any commentaries or interpretations he may find there.

This is the crux of the situation. Of all the democracies the French is undoubtedly the community in which there is the closest and most sustained contact between the elector and the elected. If the French Press is an inaccurate mirror of opinion, the French Parliament, on the other hand, does reproduce this opinion, as it were, in the raw, and the Government is entirely conscious of the fact. “ The average Deputy ” is a fair reflection of the will of the people, and the Minister who will smile gently each morning as he reads his selection of the Press comments knows perfectly well that, when a few minutes later he receives even the most ingenuous of his Parliamentary colleagues, the latter’s views will be far more revealing as to



the psychology of the country than the bold assertions that he has just been scanning.

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If I am asked what are the most deep-seated sentiments in France in the face of the external problems so brutally confronting her—as indeed, too, the British Empire—I am led, of course, to distinguish a number of different questions. But the popular judgment on them all actually draws its inspiration from a single source, an acute and profound preoccupation with peace.

On this point there is no need for an elaborate statement. The French people is in this respect in the closest possible agreement with the British. A feeling of active disgust about the horrors of war, the immorality and inherent injustice of war, that is as English as it is French. The same applies to the essential instinct that impels the Frenchman to place his moral condemnation of war in the foreground of any judgment expressed on the world situation, on the attitude of the various Powers or on the policy of his own country. Where there is a marked difference, however, is in the way in which the possibility of war presents itself to the Englishman, on the one hand, and the Frenchman on the other. For the Englishman as for the American war is not something that suddenly drops down from the skies. However out of date in fact, insularity is still the prevailing atmosphere among people in Great Britain, and there is still a profound conviction that ultimately the fact of being an island ensures for England some degree of freedom to decide. John Smith knows that because of the necessities of Imperial defence, the engagements of collective security and the intimate bond of common interests which links Great Britain with France and Belgium, war may become necessary if England is to remain England. But the possibility of making the choice subsists. At the last moment the British Government will have to decide, for example, whether it will remain faithful to the Locarno Pact and whether the defence of those British interests which induced the Government to sign that Treaty requires likewise that these obligations be fulfilled. The almost unconscious feeling of the British—all the stronger for being deep down in the subconscious—is that war can only impinge on them at the second

remove, *i.e.*, through the intermediate phase of an aggression which may not directly affect Britain, and that Britain will in the end have to make up its mind whether to say the decisive "yes" or to leave it unsaid.

But for the Frenchman the situation is not at all the same. To his mind war never presents itself as anything else but an imposition inflicted upon him by somebody else, as a blow which he cannot possibly parry, indeed a fatality to which he must perforce submit, and this sentiment is so strong that—at any rate in the regions of Northern and Eastern France—there is an utter confusion between the idea of war and the idea of invasion, the two being indissolubly connected in the minds of the people. When in March, 1936, there were rumours of war in circulation in the frontier region which I represent in the Chamber, a certain laundryman in one of the towns complained to me that for a week or so the people had stopped sending their washing to the laundry because they were expecting war to break out and they felt that if they were to have the Germans again robbing them of their washing at any rate it would be stupid to have it all nice and laundered for them!

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that an identical will to peace should be accompanied in the reactions of public opinion on each side of the Channel by various differences, two of which seem to me particularly worth while noting. The first of them is the astonishment of the Frenchman when he discovers—and he has done so twice in the past two years—that circumstances may put him in the situation which I described just now as being normally that of the Englishman, a situation, that is, where he is called upon, of his own free will to make the choice between accepting or refusing war, or at any rate the risks of war—with regard to a dispute in which he is not directly or immediately concerned. I am thinking, of course, of the Abyssinian affair and the Spanish war. In each case the man in the street found himself out of his depth and incapable of taking a clear agreed line. This particular contingency, you see, was a novelty for French public opinion. Consequently French opinion wavered. The whole thing was too much of a surprise, this having to determine one's own fate instead of it taking the form of a direct impact from outside.



The second observation which I venture to make on this point relates to the inevitable impatience of French opinion with British "wait and see." Doubtless there is a contradiction here with the attitude taken up by French opinion in the recent circumstances I have just mentioned. But that contradiction is a fact and an intelligible fact. Where Germany is concerned the sense of the danger that we are running *willy-nilly*, is too acute for public opinion to be affected by anything else—and too absorbing for the public to retain the degree of objectivity and liberty of judgment which would be necessary to an understanding of the hesitation of a large number of English people. Personally I discern a substantial amount of self-delusion in the British insistence on reserving the final decision, but I know full well that at any rate it springs from the very best motives. The mass of French opinion, however, sees in it just an involuntary encouragement of the aggressor, and they conclude that "it's no good relying on England" with the result that the feeling of solidarity and of a common destiny with the democracy across the Channel, otherwise so strong, is in this respect weakened and hampered.

French anxieties, it should be said, as also France's desire for peace, are instinctively directed to Germany, and, strictly speaking, people do not consciously bother their heads about any other country. There are other dangers, of course, but, manifestly French opinion is very much less quick to perceive them or understand them. These other perils do not impinge on a complex of feelings which are merely dormant and liable at any moment to be awakened, they do not really touch the Frenchman in a vital spot.

With regard to Italy, in particular—to cite the second of the Powers that regard war as a legitimate means of national expansion and as one of the "normal" forms of international relations—French opinion definitely lags behind in its appreciation of the dangers, it is lagging behind because of lack of experience. . . . Frenchmen have no memory of actual invasion from beyond the Alps. And, moreover, though the sentiment of "our Latin sister," etc., can hardly be regarded as more than a conventional peroration in official speeches, the fact remains that opinion does not feel any hostility to the

Italian people. That moment of hesitation which is to be observed when your Frenchman is asked to make a distinction between the German rulers and the German people, that modicum of resistance, which can always be detected, these never show themselves in regard to Italy. Then, of course, fear is an important factor of the sentiment of hostility. If the lesson of the past is that the power of Germany is something to be feared, the French public has not yet got used to the idea of being frightened about Italy. Those terrifying speeches which the Frenchman reads periodically in his newspapers irritate him and sometimes make him indignant. But deep down in himself he finds it very difficult to take all this rhodomontade seriously. These reactions are perhaps regrettable, and they may well be the fruits of an entirely false conception. But that is the psychological reality.

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Both France and England repudiate the *régimes* that obtain in Italy and Germany in themselves and in their application to French or British conditions. But at the same time even the most determined anti-fascist elements formally reject any, so to speak, ideological crusade against those countries. There is another country, however, in relation to which, if we were to believe the stories put up by foreign propaganda, France has lost all freedom of action—as a consequence of developments in domestic policy and the community of sentiments of one of the elements that make up the present Parliamentary majority. I am referring of course to Soviet Russia. I am sure I am speaking the truth when I say that the influence of a political ideology has no more weight in the relations of France and the U.S.S.R., than in our relations with the Fascist states. In this sphere, however, more than in any other, direct contact with French opinion is necessary for obtaining a valid judgment, and that is the reason no doubt why so many mistaken ideas have gained currency abroad on this matter, due largely to the vulgar polemics of some of our own newspapers. Really no objective notion can be obtained if one confines oneself either to the Communist or the Right press as one's sources of information. And the chief fact to be remembered is the meagre influence in this respect of the Communist party itself on



its rank-and-file and the narrow limits within which its leaders have to manoeuvre if they wish to maintain the confidence of the latter. Obviously in their assessment of the internal situation in Russia and the actual achievements of the U.S.S.R., French Communists, in the absence of any other information, are apt to accept to a great extent the optimistic statements of their newspapers and their leaders. But if it is a question of either the policy France is to pursue *vis-à-vis* Russia or of following the example set by the Soviets in matters of domestic policy I may say that, as far as the immense majority of Communist electors are concerned, the Russian question actually plays no part in their predilection for the Communist party. Indeed, I go further. I should say that it constitutes rather for them an obstacle. You will never get a Communist among the rank-and-file recognizing in a public debate that there can be any question of his party depending on the Moscow Government. He knows very well that an admission of this kind would arouse the hostility of the audience.

Consequently, even among the advanced elements, there is no ideological sympathy with regard to Russia strong enough to exert any influence on the conduct of our foreign policy. The Government on the one side, and the actual leaders of the Communist Party on the other, are fully aware of all that I have been saying. They realize their respective strengths in relation to public opinion, and the difference is so markedly to the advantage of the Government that its freedom of action remains complete. Evidence of this can be found, for example, in the widespread acclamation of the reply by M. Léon Blum to M. Thorez, the Communist leader, when the latter sought to make it of reproach to him that Dr. Schacht had been received with every consideration on his visit to Paris last year for an exchange of views with the French Government.

Does that mean, however, that there is no public sentiment in France in favour of the Franco-Russian pact? It would be a serious mistake to interpret the situation in that way. The point is that this sentiment derives from the traditional practice by France of a policy of alliance—or at any rate friendship—with some Power to the East of the German *Reich*. With a history of four centuries behind it this tradition still appears

to public opinion to be one of the bases of the security of France and also one of the most elementary precautions and elements of protection, and this sentiment was reinforced still more in post-war years by the fears to which the Rapallo pact gave rise. In any circumstances therefore such a friendship is likely to be popular.

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There is still another point that should be mentioned in an analysis of the fundamentals of French opinion; namely the feeling of the country with regard to national defence. The present international situation is, indeed, such that public opinion on this matter constitutes, whether we like it or not, one of the most important factors of foreign policy. As to the fidelity of France—and this applies equally to the whole of the working class—to the ideal of national defence against aggression there can never have been any serious doubt for any well-informed observers, even when the Communist party was conducting such a bitter campaign against any “bourgeois” war, whether defensive or not. But here, too, there has been a development in the last eighteen months which deserves special comment. The fact is that, whereas for a certain section of the country this patriotic allegiance was based until quite recently simply on a traditional instinct, on a sort of routine sentiment, it has now taken on a much more reflective character, affirmative and conscious. For two reasons. The first is the anti-Fascism of those elements which in the past might perhaps have been, if not recalcitrant in the matter of national defence, at any rate rather passive about it. Manifestly the threat of war to-day comes from the policies of the Fascist States. National defence therefore appears not only in the light of a struggle for France as a nation but also as a defence of those liberties to which they are passionately attached, which they have sworn to defend against any internal enemy and which they are clearly not going to allow to be endangered by any external aggression.

Do not let us forget that it was not until the Communist Party gave its support to National Defence in 1936 that it received any substantial success at the polls!

The development that I mention here, has, however, a second basis, more difficult to detect no doubt but at least as influential.



I mean the fact—since the electoral success of the *Front Populaire* and the Léon Blum Government—of a kind of re-integration of the working-class into the national community. All those of us who are in contact with the working-class population cannot help sensing this.

The French people has an amusing way of describing those who in the dim distance of exalted spheres in Paris control politics, business and administration, all those complex matters which are so difficult to follow but whose effects are felt in everyday life, in wages, unemployment, taxes and the duration of the period of military service. It christens these obscure Powers just "They." Thinking confusedly of the Government, of the Chambers and officials of all kinds the workman will ask about this or that question: "What are 'They' going to decide" and in that "They" there used to be frequently not merely the element of remoteness or ignorance but a certain holding back and disinclination to be associated with them. "They" were the men who ran things, in a France in which the working-class had no say. To-day though the term "They" may still be used from force of habit, it has actually been transformed in the working-class mind into another pronoun "we," as a consequence of the actual management of public affairs—in the formula used in resolutions in the Socialist Party—by, "our comrades who are delegates to the Government," and as a result of the social reforms which have been effected. This psychological shift, from the point of view of national defence, is extremely important. And it is reflected in the facts, as a number of officers in the Army have assured me after noticing the change of attitude among the recruits. There has been no difficulty moreover, in getting the workers to support the immense rearmament programme shown alas! to be necessary. Really it makes one smile that east of the French frontier people should apparently be taken in by the propaganda which is spread about and should have come to consider France weakened or divided.

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What I have said above will be sufficient explanation, I think, of the way in which the policy of non-intervention originated and the extent of the approval for the initiative of the French Govern-

ment in that sense on the part of the immense majority of French public opinion. Throughout the whole of the first phase of the Spanish Civil War the refusal of the French people to get involved in any ideological crusade, its determination not to give the slightest opportunity for the outbreak of a European war, and also its particular care to maintain Franco-British solidarity by an understanding with England on a common policy—these were the dominant factors which, in the general view, justified the non-intervention policy. Nevertheless, that policy from August 1936, onwards came into conflict with a spontaneous current of feeling among the working-class not so much in favour of intervention in Spain as in opposition to the discriminatory measures taken *vis-à-vis* the regular Government of Spain. But the strongest and most persistent sentiment of all remained the absolute will to peace of the population.

Unfortunately the history of non-intervention in Spain is not confined to the international agreement of August 28th, 1936, whereby the European Powers undertook to refrain from sending any war material to Spain. So, after much hesitation and a long period of delay, a second phase in the evolution of French opinion must be noted. The fact of civil war in Spain became a secondary question from the time when French opinion to a very large extent became aware that it was witnessing a case of military aggression against a neighbouring country, a new-style aggression, which if it were to be successful might mean, more or less, the conquest of Spain or at any rate a firm grip on its Government on the part of those very Powers which France herself had such cause to fear. This fact has now penetrated the public mind; witness for example the last Radical Party Congress where the change of tone and attitude as compared with the year before was most significant.

Events speak for themselves. If French opinion appreciates that the only thing to do is to remain calm, even in the face of the boastful utterances by which the Italian press and Signor Mussolini himself acknowledge their intervention in Spain, all these demonstrations and the spirit which they reveal are perturbing Frenchmen a good deal and underlining the gravity of the information which reaches them.



Does that mean, however, that French opinion has come to the point of accepting with regard to affairs in Spain, the idea of war, as it has accepted it in the event of France being directly attacked? No, certainly not. But in its anxiety to avert the risk of war its reply is no longer, as it was the year before, merely a determination to keep out. As French people see the question, there is quite a different problem now facing us. An ever-increasing majority considers that the weakness shown with regard to Italy has done immense damage to French security and has increased the danger of war against which it was hoped to secure safeguards. Non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War has not, strictly speaking, been called in question. But the toleration of Italian intervention is not only affecting the Frenchman's sense of justice and provoking more and more vigorous protests than those of the Paris workers last year, it is now actually causing a feeling of national anxiety.

Honesty compels me to admit that the failure on England's part—or apparent failure—to feel, as we do, that danger, which we regard as a common danger, has caused some sense of disappointment, very noticeable at the moment even among ordinary men and women.

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Now what is the attitude of French public opinion on the question of Germany? It would not be true to say that it is one of systematic hostility. French opinion, though it might reject the idea of political concessions such as the surrender of French colonial territory, would at all events be prepared to face some kind of arrangement which might ease the problem of German food supplies and at the same time provide an outlet for the superfluous energy of her enterprising young men. But I am no less convinced that French public opinion would not tolerate that an arrangement of this kind should be made—and I am deliberately keeping it in the vague form in which the suggestion presents itself to-day—if it were to be a free gift, a gratuitous gesture doing no good, in fact placing a premium on the policy of the mailed fist. French opinion would certainly demand a counterpart in security guarantees, which would have to be sought no doubt in some means of checking the armament race, together with a

scheme of international supervision of armaments. There is nothing in such a gesture, as I see it, which could be called bargaining ; really you cannot start measuring means for the pacification of Europe on the scales, as the ingredients of a prescription are weighed in a chemist's shop.

A year ago, on January 19th, 1936, at Lyon, M. Blum, then the Prime Minister of France, made an offer of collaboration to which so far German ears have remained deaf. Can we hope that this deafness is now wearing off ?

In any case, French opinion is prepared to go to any lengths to secure and preserve peace. It is in this direction that it looks for a counterpart to any concessions made. And that is the meaning French opinion attaches to the stipulation, on which the leaders of the two countries have proclaimed their agreement in London, that any concession must be incorporated within the framework of a general settlement.

"General settlement"—the term is synonymous with effective guarantees of peace. And if British opinion were to diverge from the opinion held in France on the necessity for a policy which may compel our neighbours to put their cards on the table—the only governing condition being the supreme goal of peace—then I can only say that the future of the two Western democracies and of their position in the world would be seriously imperilled.



## AUSTRALIA AND THE ANGLO—U.S. TREATY.

BY A. A. JAMES.

THE response of public opinion to the proposed Anglo-American trade treaty, in Australia, as elsewhere, shows a sharp conflict between those who view only the possible results of trade bargaining and those who value trade aids towards a consolidation of the English-speaking races and the democratic countries of western Europe. The attitude of the Australian Government was first stated by the Minister for Commerce, Dr. Earle Page, as one of welcoming the trade treaty, given safeguards against injury to any Australian industry. Such a strictly economic viewpoint is officially correct in a matter concerned officially only with trade. Since then he has ventured a welcome on non-commercial lines.

Viewing the countries spread out as on a map, but live and palpitating, it is difficult to reduce them to pure economics, or even reasonable order. They will not be so reduced. The geographical distribution is startlingly suggestive of possible combinations and cleavages. The United States takes form vividly in the centre, surrounded by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom. Great Britain, withal so formidable, seems somehow on the edge, set closely against the seething cauldron of Europe. At the apex of lines drawn north-west and north from Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia, Japan plunges truculently through China, and, as is sometimes remarked of that aggressive Power, "does as she likes."

The United States, despite isolationist fears to the contrary, is closely identified by more than geographical position with the surrounding British peoples. The American, visiting Europe, is at home in England, but is in strange country as soon as he crosses to the Continent. My patriotism as a child, drawn from ordinary Australian juvenile contacts, and without any American

connections, was almost as strong for the United States as for Australia and Great Britain. After some years of analysis, classification is more difficult, but the sentiment remains. If America had entered the colonial stage later in British history she might still have been part of the Empire. Likewise Australia, if colonized two hundred years earlier, might have sought independence. . . . In trade, Australia's independence is equal to that of the United States. But America lacks some Empire privileges.

Australia would surrender all the benefits of Ottawa if required by Britain's internal need; she would surrender them equally with the other Dominions in case of Empire need; but would resist strenuously attempts by foreign nations, without adequate reason, to remove a single clause from the British preferential contracts. If it were fitting that the Empire as a whole should make material contribution to world economic welfare, or to consolidate the English-speaking and western democratic countries, there is no doubt Australia's contribution would be in full measure. Australian public opinion is at present concerned as to just how far the Anglo-American negotiations, for trade reasons or because of their more impelling background, call for export sacrifice.

Since Ottawa, the British market for foodstuffs has been stabilized to an extent by the internal agricultural policy on the one hand, and the Empire preferences on the other. This stabilization has not increased the total British market for products which Australia exports. Imports of wheat from all countries into the United Kingdom in 1936 were almost 5,000,000 cwts. less than in 1932; 898,000 tons of chilled and frozen beef, mutton, and lamb were imported in 1936, compared with 915,000 tons in 1932. Wool imports in 1936 totalled 914,200,000 lbs., and 918,300,000 lbs. in 1932. Butter imports, on the contrary, increased from 8,364,000 cwts. in 1932 to 9,752,000 cwts. in 1936.

Australia's exports to this contracted market, in terms of value, show a large, but misleading increase. By quantities, the increases, though outweighing any losses, were not so large. Australia's butter shipments to the United Kingdom actually were less by 5.7 per cent. in 1936 than in 1932, and wheat



by 3.5 per cent. Her exports of wool to Great Britain were 10.7 per cent. larger in 1936 than in 1932, and of frozen and chilled beef, mutton, and lamb approximately 25 per cent. larger. There were also substantial increases in British imports of Australian dried and canned fruits.

These results demonstrate that Australia has received material benefit from the operation of the British preferences, but also suggest that but for these preferences her trade to the smaller British market might have declined.

Further advantages were obtained by the stabilization of channels of trade. The effect of this stability may be instanced by the Australian meat industry. Following on Ottawa, the British preference of 3d. per lb. on beef, equal to about £2 per carcase, with a quota exceeding Australia's immediate export capacity, enabled the meat industry to pursue a settled policy of production for export. The meat quota may not have been in the best interests of world trade ; it certainly was not in the interests of Argentina beef producers ; but it was in the interests of the Australian meat industry, and Australia's reaction to any impairment of Ottawa privileges may be gauged accordingly.

The Ottawa Conference, held in a period of trade dislocation and difficulty, was an effort to stabilize channels of trade in the only wider political sphere in the world in which several nations constituted one Empire. Its chief advantage has not been the immediate gain to any one country, but the stability introduced into the large area of world trade represented by the British Empire.

Almost every country in the Empire has stabilized some part of its industry, its transport, and its finance, on the basis of Ottawa and other British and Empire preferences. The United States, even, has established new industries in Australia to replace lost exports, and has duplicated many of its industries across the Canadian border to obtain the advantage of British preferential rates.

As a result of Ottawa, therefore, there has been a certain redistribution of capital ; industry is active in places where otherwise it might not have existed ; communities are safeguarded in their homes and associations. The effects of Ottawa have become stabilized in Empire economy.

It is here that the theory of the general removal of trade barriers breaks on the hard rocks of everyday facts. The ideal world might be one in which each territory would produce those commodities most appropriate to its climate and resources, with a free exchange of surplus production. But the world has not been divided among the nations in that way. Such a theory might excite speculation as to the future, but it has no present application. The trade difficulties of recent years have not been merely a restriction of the freedom of trade, but economic dislocation requiring a slow and usually painful readjustment. The dislocation of conditions now existing might be equally dangerous. The introduction of more freedom of trade than the industries of Australia or Canada could withstand—in competition with the exports of other industrial countries—would be disastrous to those industries. It may be said that Australia and Canada should have remained large farms for the world supply of agricultural products; but the fact is that they did not; and it is the fact itself that has to be faced by the Anglo-American negotiators.

The Dominions have five angles for favourable re-consideration of the Ottawa contracts: for their own benefit individually; for the benefit of Great Britain; for the benefit of the Empire; for that of the English-speaking nations; or internationally.

Australia would not entertain modification of Ottawa for the trade benefit of the United States only. But liberal concessions would probably be made to obtain tangible improvements in any of the directions indicated. She has shown that she is capable of strenuous contention in small trade matters, where trade is the only consideration, and of substantial trade sacrifices where more important issues are involved. New Zealand and Australia, for example, while enjoying a preferential agreement covering much of their trade, have fought cheerfully and vigorously by means of quarantine embargoes and tariffs, Australia endeavouring to exclude New Zealand butter and potatoes, and New Zealand prohibiting (now with seasonal permits) the importation of Australian fresh fruit and vegetables in order to import oranges from California and to further her apple trade in the United States. Australia has penalized South African maize, earning retaliation against her wheat and

butter. In contrast to these family differences within the Empire, the trade diversion policy instituted in 1936 against Japan illustrates Australia's capacity to risk valuable export trade when British interests are at stake.

With this fundamental aspect in mind it may be safely said that Australia's attitude towards the United States in connection with the proposed trade treaty will depend upon the underlying meaning of the American proposals.

If, as Sir Arthur Willert stated in the September FORTNIGHTLY, Mr. Hull wishes to see the American reciprocity area linked with the Imperial preference area, and with the democracies of Western Europe, strengthening the European democracies against the dictatorships, and tempting the dictatorships to join the freer trading countries, then Australia is not likely to adopt half-measures in her co-operation. With the consummation of English-speaking solidarity, Australia would be as loyal to that confederation as she is to the Empire. It would in effect be a larger and stronger Empire, with voluntary adherence to agreements for the benefit of the nations included in the group, and of those nations reciprocally inclined.

Australia, as much as any other country, would agree that such an understanding is the greatest need of the democratic world at the present time. That the Empire countries understand its full significance is shown by the unanimous support of the treaty in principle by the Empire Governments, following on the Imperial Conference. If it had been solely a matter of trade, the official welcome to the negotiations would not have been so general. One has not to go beyond the pronouncements by the leading trade organizations, especially in Great Britain, for differences between the Governmental and business viewpoints.

At present Australia is one of the black sheep excluded from America's fiscal fold. Germany is the other. These are the only two countries which have not received the benefit of the tariff reductions made by the United States as a result of reciprocal trade agreements. Germany and Australia alone are denied the most-favoured nation treatment, owing to their alleged discrimination against the United States in the matter of tariff, exchange, or importation regulations.



Australia applied her trade diversion policy to the United States in May, 1936, at the same time as against Japan, but for almost directly opposite reasons. (She had suffered an adverse balance of trade with the United States for the ten years prior to June 30, 1935, amounting to £180,000,000, and paid £22,000,000 sterling in interest to New York.) Following on a refusal by the United States to negotiate a trade agreement, Australia subjected about one-fifth of her imports from the United States to licensing restrictions, with the result that goods usually purchased from America were obtained as follows: replaced by Australian products, £764,000; from the United Kingdom, £802,000; Germany, £225,000; Canada, £169,000; Belgium, £88,000; and the balance of a total of £2,200,000 from other countries.

Like the minor trade differences with the other Dominions, this was purely a trade matter, and has not affected the cordial relations diplomatically between the two countries, nor with the very courteous American nationals conducting American businesses in Australia. As a result of the restrictions some £3,000,000 worth of new American capital has been invested in Australian industry. Also the trade position is more favourable for the negotiation of an Australian-American trade agreement. America has twice declined to negotiate, but the new situation created by the prospective Anglo-American treaty should be conducive to a settlement of the two countries' trade problems. Incidentally, Dr. Page has stated that an opportune time for negotiations would be when the Ottawa Agreements are being reviewed in 1938.

One result of an agreement on doubt would be the inclusion of Australia in the most-favoured nation circle, but an immediate benefit sought would be a reduction in the United States duties on wool, which are from  $1/5\frac{1}{2}$ d. to  $1/10\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. on the clean content, equivalent to 60 to 80 per cent. *ad valorem*. The United States is one of the very few countries which imposes a duty on wool.

Meanwhile the application of the trade diversion policy to United States imports has been abandoned, presumably to facilitate the British Government's negotiations. Also the reason for the restrictions has been removed by Australia's

attainment of a favourable trade balance with the United States for the first time since Federation. The inclusion in Australia's exports to America for the year ended June 30, 1937, of wool to the value of £6,033,697 compared with £1,620,357 in 1935-36, suggests that America is again prepared to pay the price, and the duty in addition, for the fine wools, a luxury article, of which she was a large purchaser at the Australian auctions in the 1920's.

To sum up—if the Anglo-American trade treaty is consummated, purely as a trade matter, Australia will seek compensation in the United States for any concessions at her expense in the British market. If the trade treaty is the vehicle of a deeper Anglo-American understanding, Australia, taken with the other Dominions into Great Britain's confidence, may be expected to offer fullest co-operation.

## THE PLIGHT OF IRISH AGRICULTURE

BY JOSEPH JOHNSTON

WHILE there is nothing unique about Irish history, it is a most convenient storehouse or museum from which one may illustrate those collective imbecilities which have perverted world history and still continue to poison international and class relations. The present war without truce or herald which Japan is waging on China differs in no essential respect from the impact of medieval England on medieval Ireland. The only historically true and artistically justifiable attitude, then, to Irish events, past or present, is to view them *sub specie aeternitatis*, and to expound them, not as mere Irish or Anglo-Irish happenings but as local manifestations of widely distributed forces and tendencies.

The fundamental cause of the economic revolution in what is now Eire was the desire to refashion our economic life in the direction of a greater degree of economic self-sufficiency, and develop the industrial arm that had been withered by the East Wind of our history. This desire is not peculiarly Irish. But in our case it had a peculiar intensity on account of the economic relations which seemed to make our welfare excessively dependent on the export of a single type of product to the English market. Thus, says a Fianna Fail election broadsheet,

"Before 1932 most of our towns were mere distribution centres. The cattle went out—the foreign goods came in. There was nothing for the people to do (except in the large cities) but send out the cattle and buy the foreign goods."

Hence the policy of avoiding reliance on the demand for one type of agricultural product and "creating a home market which will never diminish." Better to commit suicide, so to speak, than hang on to this dangerous economic dependence.

It would be easy to show that the philosophy underlying this policy is riddled with fallacies, but there remains the one



unpleasant fact that our excessive dependence on the British market gave, or seemed to give, to British politicians a means of bringing economic pressure to bear on us, which in fact they were short-sighted enough to use.

The particular economic fallacies which have been most evident in the detailed development of our national economic policies might be illustrated *ad nauseam*. It is more important at this stage to remind British readers of some elementary economic truths which were present in the mind of Adam Smith, but have become somewhat obscured in the rather exotic atmosphere in which the body of accepted economic doctrine has grown up.

Non-agricultural economic producers depend for the necessities of life on the surplus produced by agriculturists. Consequently the growth of this surplus, whatever its causes, constitutes a limiting factor on the growth and differentiation of the economy in general. When Great Britain abolished the Corn Laws she called in the surplus of non-British agriculture to redress the deficiencies of British, and thus made possible the enormous industrial and commercial development of the second half of the nineteenth century. The first was an indispensable condition of the second. We see in our own day the serious difficulties in which the industrial structure of Germany finds itself because its accumulated stature requires a foundation on world agriculture while national policy has sought to limit that to national agriculture, thus inverting, so to speak, the economic pyramid.

If we look more closely at the motives, as distinct from the physical conditions, which govern the production and sale of a surplus by agricultural producers we must distinguish two extreme cases, and notice the possible existence of many intermediate grades. The surplus in question is, of course, what is available for sale to non-agriculturists over and above what is consumed in the farmer's household or by the so-called agricultural community. It is in essence an economic surplus and is not necessarily a physiological one. The motives for its production may be those of economic inducement, or they may reflect some form of economic exploitation of agriculture by the exchange economy in general.

The peasants of revolutionary Russia had no inducement to

sell their surplus in exchange for the non-agricultural goods which urban industry was not yet in a position to supply. But the surplus, without which the industrial programme and probably the exchange economy must have collapsed, was forthcoming nevertheless—at the point of the bayonet—and the Russian peasants were left with very little grain for their own subsistence.

This is one way of preserving an agricultural foundation for the exchange economy. Results similar in essence, though more tactful in method, have been produced again and again in Irish and world history. The Roman Empire was based on the systematic exploitation of agriculture, and when the exploitation ceased to be effective the Empire collapsed, and with it the exchange economy. Agricultural rents in eighteenth-century Ireland were so high in relation to the gross value of agricultural produce that when he had paid them the peasant had no money left to buy anything else. He had to sell so large a proportion of his produce that he had little left for his own subsistence, and in times of exceptional scarcity the Irish peasantry lived on weeds, and tapped the veins of the cattle in order to drink their blood without killing them. On this foundation an exchange economy was built up which, in its cultural aspect, the historian delights to depict. In recent times, if the farmers of New Zealand, the U.S.A., Australia, Denmark or dozens of other countries, had paid their mortgage liabilities in full they would have had no purchasing power left to buy non-agricultural goods and very little of their own produce to live on either.

In normal times the agriculturist is induced to produce a surplus for exchange by a comparison in which financial costs of production, prices of produce sold, and prices of desirable non-agricultural goods play the chief part. If costs, relative prices, and overhead financial liabilities are such that no money is left to buy non-agricultural goods the element of inducement disappears, leaving an exchange economy based on the exploitation of agriculture. Except in Russia the economy as a whole has not sought to maintain itself by substituting the bayonet for the price-system. With instinctive wisdom it has eased the degree of economic exploitation by remitting some of the financial liabilities of farmers and thus saved itself from collapse.

Though the worst dangers have been avoided it cannot be pretended that the present relations between agriculture and industry, either in Ireland or elsewhere, give no grounds for alarm. The kind of economic inducement which is needed, if the economy as a whole is to preserve a stable agricultural foundation, requires such a relationship of prices as will induce agriculturists to maintain a gradually expanding volume of production, which should at the same time gradually differentiate itself in response to the changing incidence of demand that accompanies a rising standard of living. A period of world plenty has been succeeded by one of relative scarcity of primary foodstuffs. Agricultural incomes in the U.S.A. have risen with rising prices, but the fear of over-production looms ahead, confidence is shaken and depression threatens. The alternation of glut and scarcity does not provide a desirable kind of economic inducement to farmers, since both alike may be financially disastrous to them, and each in different ways is injurious to non-agricultural interests. Industrial expansion, now intensified by the race of rearmament, must rest on a precarious foundation so long as the world agricultural situation is unsatisfactory.

Considerable industrial expansion has taken place recently in the twenty-six Counties. The increase in net industrial output in 1936, as compared with 1931, is a matter of some six millions sterling. The other aspect of things, however, is that net agricultural output has diminished by at least £17 millions in value since 1931 and is still diminishing in aggregate volume. In 1929 price relations and production were such that our 670,000 persons "gainfully occupied" in agriculture obtained an average net output equivalent to nearly £84 a year per head, produce consumed in farm households being valued at farmers' selling prices. In 1936 that average was of the order of £60 per head. Agricultural prices were in 1936 10% below pre-war while the cost of living index stood at 60% above. The average of all real incomes from agriculture is less than the amount which public policy now seeks to fix as a compulsory minimum level for certain sections of our 130,000 agricultural wage workers. Our urban population as a whole, and especially that section of it which depends on the new artificially sustained industries,



is in fact a privileged class, a kind of native Ascendancy, differing doubtless in many ways from the Protestant Ascendancy of the eighteenth century, but resembling it in the one fundamental fact, that it is a vampire class battenning on the decaying body of our exploited and impoverished agriculture. This is one of the most curious ironies of the many in which our modern history abounds.

But it is not unique. Price relations between New Zealand exports of butter to Great Britain and imports of British industrial products to New Zealand were, in some recent years, such that the New Zealand farmer was forced to produce more and more while consuming less and less, and in this respect he was typical of overseas agriculturists in general. Thus the urban population of Eire merely represents on a national scale the position of economic privilege which British and other industrialized communities were in a position to maintain during the years of agricultural plenty and depression on a world-wide scale, though only Great Britain had the good sense to extract from it a full measure of national advantage. It remains to be seen what the reaction will be to the present agricultural scarcity or, in our case, agricultural decay.

The irony of, in fact, paying the annuities while pretending to keep them has a superficial political explanation which is obvious, but in its more profound significance it is related to the necessity of maintaining at all costs the production of that agricultural surplus on which the life of the exchange economy depends. Half our normal output of agricultural produce finds a market in Great Britain. The home market, meaning the non-agricultural population of Eire, provides an outlet for one sixth at most. The immediate effect of the British taxes was to create a price situation in which it was no longer worth while for the Irish farmer to produce any surplus at all, either for the home market or the export market. He would have simply stopped producing it, as soon as the momentum of existing production commitments had been exhausted, if the price situation had not been restored in some degree by the payment of bounties on favoured agricultural exports. In this way the British taxes were counteracted and to some extent the burden of the disputed payments was assumed

as a liability of the taxpayer in general. The worst consequences of the political folly which involved us in the Economic War were neutralized by the instinctive wisdom which preserved the foundations of the exchange economy here, by methods which have many parallels elsewhere.

As to the fact of our agricultural decay there can be no possible doubt. Our agriculture is and must remain one in which the production of animal products plays the chief part. The crops which we acquire by cultivation are produced mainly as feed for cattle, poultry, and pigs. Oats and potatoes are doubtless an important source of employment and national wealth, but by far the most important crop which we produce is the grass which clothes our nine million acres of pasture and meadow land. To a certain extent it may be said to produce itself, but it requires more cultivation than the townsman generally realizes. Grass, then, is our most important agricultural raw material, and we supplement it by cultivating a certain amount of oats, barley and roots, and importing additional animal feed from abroad. Just as the intensity of cotton production in Lancashire can be measured by the import of the raw material cotton, so we may measure the intensity of our agriculture by ascertaining from year to year the available supplies of cultivated and imported raw materials. In nutritional value a stone of turnips or mangels is worth little more than a pound of cereals, and oats, barley and maize have much the same analysis. Consequently, if we divide our officially estimated annual production of root crops by twelve, and add for each year the result of this division to the estimated production of oats and barley and the known figure for the import in each year of maize and its products (the chief imported animal feed) we get, in terms of cereals, a series of totals which reflects admirably the intensity of our agricultural effort. Between 1926 and 1932 this aggregate varied between 32,000,000 cwt. and 35,000,000 cwt., but since then the trend has been steadily downwards, and in 1936 was little more than 24,000,000 cwt. To a limited extent this is offset by the by-products of our wheat and beet acreage, but only to a limited extent.

The fertility of our very important grass lands depends on their being stocked with a sufficient number of large cattle, and

on these cattle being fed in the winter-time with a complete ration (including oilcake which must be imported), part of which returns to the land in the form of manure, and is indeed the chief agent for its maintenance and improvement whether the land is grazed or cultivated. As eighty per cent. of our output of cattle and calves was normally exported, our Government proceeded to wage ruthless war on our cattle industry. Hundreds of thousands of calves had their throats cut in accordance with this national policy, and the result is that we have now little more than 600,000 dry cattle "two years old and upwards" instead of the normal, which is about 900,000, and our grass lands are understocked. The grass, like the cattle, is deteriorating, for the cattle are no longer house-fed so liberally as before. Our import of oilseed cake and meal, which in 1931 exceeded 1,100,000 cwt., fell below 430,000 cwt. in 1936.

The diminished use of artificial manures tells a similar tale. The import of basic slag (a very important grass manure) varied between 28,000 and 38,000 tons from 1926 to 1931, was practically nil. in 1933 and 1934, and in 1936 was only 15,000 tons. The figures for the import of superphosphate and kainit reveal a similar shrinking tendency. Those for the import of rock phosphate, for manufacture by our domestic artificial manure factories, after falling to 49,000 tons in 1933, were in 1936 back at 72,000 tons which may be regarded as normal. Yet, on balance, the total consumption of phosphatic and potassic manures is down enormously. These are the most important of the manures which permanently enrich the soil. Nitrogenous manures are notoriously short-lived in their effects, and a recent substantial increase in the import of sulphate of ammonia, above the pre-1932 normal, is a poor compensation for the decrease of the others. They reflect merely the despairing effort of the farmer to snatch a quick cash profit from the cultivation of State subsidized beet and wheat, regardless of the long-term effect on his pocket or on the soil.

In America the recent improvement in the financial situation of agriculture has been to some extent negated by a substantial increase in the hourly wages of urban workers, with injurious reactions on the price relations between agricultural and non-agricultural products. The rising cost of living in these islands



threatens to create a similar situation, which will once more upset the balance between agriculture and industry, or rather prevent the restoration of an equilibrium which may be permanent because not too intolerable for agriculture. Urban interests sometimes forget that the recent expansion of urban industry was based on the exploitation of agriculture, and therefore on a condition of things which could not possibly become permanent in the world as a whole.

Another and a final irony. Free Trade is generally believed to have ruined Irish agriculture in the middle of the last century, but it is certain that only Free Trade can save it now. It is no exaggeration to say that the greatest of all agricultural interests is now everywhere the restoration and maintenance of substantial freedom of commerce. This interest requires no demonstration in the case of Australia, the Argentine Republic and other agricultural surplus exporting countries. They need free markets, in Great Britain and elsewhere, because only thus can they keep *up* the agricultural end of the price relationship in their own countries. They need equally a relaxation of industrial protectionism in their own countries because only thus can they keep *down* the non-agricultural end of the domestic price-relationship. Only in food-importing countries does the policy of agricultural protectionism appear to promise immediate benefits. Farmers in England, Germany and similarly situated countries will have to learn that they will lose more by lowering the standard of living of their industrial customers at home, and disorganizing international trade, than they will gain by stealing business from overseas competitors whose agriculture, on closer examination, will be found to be more complementary to their own than competitive.

One thing is certain, a friendly settlement of the Anglo-Irish Economic War, and a restoration of normal commercial relations between our two countries would shine as a "good deed in a naughty world," and have invaluable results, even if it left much to be desired from the point of view of an old-fashioned Free Trader.

## INDIA AND THE MACHINE

BY F. YEATS-BROWN

FOR the first time in history the Indian villager is becoming really travel-conscious. The motor bus has revolutionized life in a way the train never did, for a train journey meant—and still means—a long walk to the nearest railway station, bribing a clerk to issue the ticket without undue delay, and all kinds of discomfort. The bus, on the contrary, goes everywhere (from Cape Cormorin to Kabul) and covers twenty miles an hour compared to the bullock-cart's twenty miles a day. What the results of this new and popular form of transport will be no one can foretell, but they are likely to be staggering in their proportions, for you cannot stir three hundred million people out of the sleep of ages without some surprising consequences.

Exploring these possibilities, I took the public conveyance between Ootacamund and Mysore, in the Nilgiri Hills. The driver negotiated the steep road with his bare feet on the pedals. We gallivanted along the edge of precipices, and grazed mountain sides: at each sharp S-turn our old and heavily laden charabanc sagged on its springs and complained bitterly of its brakes.

From where I sat, next the driver, I could have jumped to safety; but what of the woman behind me, with a baby at her breast? And the twenty other passengers, compressed into sixteen seats? However, no one seemed at all alarmed. Indians have excellent nerves, and our chauffeur, who was singing light-heartedly, was an accomplished driver. He was making up time, in order to stop at a shrine, where the husband of the woman with the baby wanted to worship Parvati, the goddess of fertility.

We pulled up in the foothills of the Mysore plain, before the image of the goddess, with her long slanting eyes, and full

breasts. The worshipper broke a coconut at her feet, bent down to touch the lintel of the temple with his forehead, offered her six bananas, bowed again. Then he picked up his bananas (he was a poor man and would eat them afterwards) and returned to his seat. Meanwhile, the driver had kept his engine running : he sympathized with the old gods of stone, but he was also the servant of the new gods of steel . . . In this little scene India's attitude towards the West was epitomized. The internal combustion engine, like electric light, the cinema, and the radio, are not ousting the deities of the Hindu Pantheon, but are being added to them.

Fifteen years ago, when I was last in India, the average Indian mechanic grudged an engine its fuel, and considered he was pampering it if he gave it more than a few cupfuls of oil. Nowadays he knows better. Machinery is still a mystery to him, but he has infinite faith in its power to earn him money provided it is suitably propitiated. There is a ritual to be performed before the works of the General Motors Corporation no more and no less mysterious than his temple worship ; so he offers lubricant and water to his engine in the same spirit as he worships Parvati, or brings an offering of gingelly-oil to Nandi, the amiable bull on which the great god Siva rides.

As a driver, he has improved of late years. He is still inconsiderate of other traffic, and inclined to use his horn with maddening iteration, but he has good judgment, and his nervous reflexes are quick. Sikhs are among the best mechanics. Their religion ordains that they shall never cut their hair and that they shall always wear an iron bracelet : both the bracelet and the hair seem somewhat anachronistic when you see them at work on a repair job, with their well-buttered locks mingling with a carburettor or a fan-belt, but they have real mechanical aptitude.

It is a complete delusion to suppose that Indians are bad workmen : silversmiths, ivory-workers, inlay-workers, blacksmiths and carvers all bear witness to an exceptionally high standard of craftsmanship. The late Sir Jagadis Bose, the plant scientist, had all the apparatus used in his experiments made for him in Calcutta. When I visited him at the Bose Institute, he showed me all sorts of marvellous mechanisms by which he measured



the reactions of a mimosa to light, the pulsations of its sap, the rate of its feeding, and other extremely minute nervous changes. Every one of his enquiries into the basic principles of life—enquiries which have made him world-famous—depended upon ingenious contrivances for measurement, invented by himself, and executed by Indian artificers.

In contrast to the peaceful and studious atmosphere of the Bose Institute, I found another laboratory in the far north of India devoted to the making of lethal weapons. It is situated in the pass between Peshawar and Kohat, in Independent Territory, so that there can be no British interference with its activities. The industry arose owing to the need for weapons of the wild tribes of the North West Frontier : smuggling arms is difficult and expensive in these parts, and rifles are unobtainable in British India except by theft or murder ; hence this factory in the Kohat Pass, in the no-man's land between the Indian Empire and Afghanistan.

I do not suppose that there are many craftsmen in America or Europe who would undertake to build a whole rifle, lock, stock and barrel, with their own hands, even with the help of the most modern tools, but in the Kohat Pass it is being done every day by a dozen Pathans, turning out modern high-velocity rifles with practically no tools. They possess an old lathe and a charcoal furnace, but that is the whole equipment of the arsenal. It is an amazing sight to see them boring out the rifling of the barrels while holding them in their prehensile big toes.

Why these Pass-made rifles do not explode is a mystery. The fact remains that they do not, and that they are weapons of precision in the hands of a Pathan sniper. They can be recognized by their stocks, which are of inferior wood to that used in British rifles, but otherwise they are good imitations, even to the Government marks, of the weapons made at Dum Dum and Woolwich.

Ammunition-making has not proved a success in this arsenal ; nor have the Pathans yet made a machine-gun ; but no doubt they will. There seems no limit to their ingenuity. One day they will give up marauding the lowlands, for machine-guns and aeroplanes have weighted the dice very heavily in favour of *pax Britannica*.

The only decent typist I discovered in the whole of the great Indian peninsula was a Pathan. In Delhi, where there are thousands of clerks, I tried for days to get a secretary who could at least copy my manuscript, if not take dictation. A dozen men and two girls came to my hotel. Each was more incompetent than the last, until this paragon of a Pathan arrived, who could take shorthand at eighty words a minute.

Why there should be so few typists in India, when there are so many excellent mechanics I have not been able to discover. Perhaps it is because language is a more flexible thing than machinery, and can stand worse treatment without actual breakdown : the fact remains that it is the exception to receive a properly typed letter, while all the Indian-owned newspapers (except the *Hindu* of Madras, and Mr. Gandhi's weekly *Harijan*) are carelessly edited and full of misprints.

Of course, not all Indians are good mechanics. My servant, for instance, a good old-fashioned retainer, who imparted a mirror-like shine to my shoes by some ancestral formula for polish, was extremely suspicious of modernity. Although he could read, he shied at the dial of an automatic telephone like a horse at wind-blown paper, and zip-fasteners gave him the jitters. I think he must have had some sort of complex about my sponge-bag, for never once could I prevail on him to perform the simple operation of closing it. Yet he was able to put the top on my portable typewriter, and to switch on the radio, or a fan. Once I asked him what was wrong with a fan that needed oiling : "*Garmi lugga*," he replied promptly : "It has heat stroke!"

Fifteen years ago, the average servant could not recognize which way up a photograph should go. Shown a picture of his master's wife, he would as likely as not mistake it for a cow or an elephant. But now even the simplest peasant is taking to cutting photogravures out of the weekly papers, and adorning the mud walls of his home with them. My servant was a cinema fan, and he believed that in some other incarnation I had lived through the incidents depicted in *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*.

He accepted the miracles of modern science without question. Although he never actually travelled with me by aeroplane, he considered flying as a very natural and normal means of travel.

(After all, his gods flew, many thousands of years ago). If I had said that I was going to the moon, he would merely have asked me whether I would be taking my dress-suit. As to hearing voices over the air, or producing the songs of a famous nautch-girl out of some flat discs, he took these things as a matter of course: some of them, like zip-fasteners, irritated him, but none of them were matters for awe or surprise.

Indians rarely betray astonishment. I have taken a party of Sikh and Punjaubi officers through the West-end of London by night during the Jubilee celebrations, have accompanied them over a submarine and a battleship and a giant aeroplane, sat with them near the royal box during the Aldershot Tattoo. They were only mildly interested. But they liked the barracks at Aldershot: they were reminded of their own cantonments in India.

None the less, Indians are quick to use any inventions which conform with their customs, or simplify them. Right across Moslem India, the rising of the new moon that marks the end of the four weeks' fast of Ramadan is reported by radio. There is no uncertainty nowadays about the exact moment, as there used to be: from the minarets of Mecca the word goes out, to Morocco and to Malaya, that the crescent of Islam has been seen and that the Faithful may rejoice.

When I was in Lahore I hired a car that was fitted with an ingenious arrangement of venetian blinds. I thought at first that it might be some adaptation of a gangster's limousine but it was nothing so sinister: it was merely a *purdah* car, in which the wives of the old-fashioned gentry could travel screened from public view.

There is no doubt that India is being modernized and industrialized, but it is happening quite casually. Sometimes it seems to me as if the West had spent itself in giving birth to our marvellous inventions, and now had no psychic energy left to direct and control them, so that one day they may destroy us. India on the contrary has adopted mass-production in the cotton-mills of Bombay, in the jute-factories of Calcutta, and in the Tata steel-works . . . almost in her sleep. There are things on her horizon infinitely more important than production-lines, and looms, and annealing presses. She takes industry as she finds it, for it is sometimes convenient and profitable



(pace Mr. Gandhi) but she does not surrender to it an atom of her essential calm. Nowhere throughout the length and breadth of the peninsula will you see the tired business man, the quick-lunch counter, the scurry and rush of our great, proud, cruel and slightly insane cities. She refuses to take our civilization seriously.

This serenity, as I have already pointed out, is not lethargy or incompetence, but the reverse. Indians have no intention of being mastered by machines. One of the most remarkable experiments ever made in rural-industrial life is in progress in a community of Hindus known as Radhasoamis, living at Dayalbagh, near Agra. These people have formed themselves into a religious brotherhood and have taken to modern machinery, not primarily for profit, but in order to make their colony self-supporting.

Twenty years ago there was nothing at Dayalbagh except a small and obscure sect of Hinduism. Now there is a beautiful Garden City, with the best dairy farm in Asia, and *forty-two industries*, ranging all the way from tanning and weaving to the production of automobile parts and precision balances. The products of Dayalbagh are known throughout India, and have a turnover of £60,000 a year. Everything has been accomplished by the colonists themselves, without foreign help.

When Sir Anand Sarup, whose sudden death last year was such a grievous loss to India, determined to industrialize Dayalbagh, he enjoined his followers (who now number two thousand) to abstain from idle political discussions, and to get to work along Western lines. God meant us to use machines. God meant us to make the world a garden, and to live happily in it, producing by our brow's sweat a continual promise of increase. The results have been amazing.

Here in Dayalbagh is the answer to what machines can do for India. Where there was waste land and misery twenty years ago, there is now a flourishing community, well-fed, well-housed, and at peace with itself and its neighbours.

The Radhasoamis believe in God, in leadership, in the higher faculties of man, which can be developed and evolved by certain exercises in meditation; and they have proved, beyond a possibility of doubt, that their faith is justified by their works.

The forty-two industries are typical. No doubt Sir Anand Sarup could have made more money for his followers by concentrating on one or two : for instance, his very profitable electric fans, or his furniture business ; but that would have been boring. Man does not live by bread alone, nor by making endless routine motions under the eye of a foreman. So the Radhasoamis extended their range. Radio is still in its infancy in India, but it has enormous possibilities. One day Dayalbagh may have its own transmitting station, and soon it will surely be turning out receivers by the hundred thousand.

The Radhasoamis are doing much more than prove that the Indian is a capable and versatile craftsman, for we know that already : they are, I believe in all seriousness, showing the world a new way of life.

## HENRY IRVING.

BY H. M. WALBROOK.

A RIDICULOUS objection occasionally heard to Irving's acting was that he was "always Irving."\* In a way, of course, he was. How could he be otherwise? At Burlington House, Leighton, Millais, and the other outstanding painters of the day were always themselves, so that one could recognize at a glance by each artist's individuality, and without the aid of the catalogue, a portrait as by Sargent or by Watts, a sea-piece as by Hook or Henry Moore, a classical composition as by Poynter or Alma Tadema. It was as impossible for Irving in any character to be like, say, Wilson Barrett, as it was for Charles Wyndham to be like Toole or Ellen Terry to be like Nelly Farren. Every great artist, be he poet, painter, sculptor, actor, or writer, must ever be himself, and it is as such that he charms or repels. Yet to suggest that Irving's or any other great actor's performances were merely repetitions of each other would be to utter mere nonsense. What did such impersonations as his Hamlet and Shylock, his Benedick and Lear, his Mathias and Doricourt, his Iago and Dubosc, his Jeremy Diddler and Dr. Primrose, his Charles I. and Louis XI.—what, I ask, did all these have in common! One thing and one only—the actor's personal force. To look at and to listen to, each was absolutely different from the rest.

The five years which opened in 1871 with his first appearance as Mathias in "The Bells" and included his London *débuts* as Hamlet and Richelieu and a tour of the leading cities of Britain and Ireland which was literally a triumphal progress, may well have been the happiest in his life. After years of hard work, chiefly in the provinces (he played over four hundred parts in his first three years on the stage) he had become the leading

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\*February 6th, 1938, will be the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Henry Irving.



actor at the Lyceum, revealing his powers in a crescendo of successes, until so steady a pen as that of Joseph Knight wrote of him as follows in *The Athenæum* :

“ Kean in the height of his triumphs awoke no greater enthusiasm than is now displayed on first nights at the Lyceum, and Macready during his last days inspired less interest than is shown in Mr. Irving. It is necessary to turn to France and the career of Mlle. Rachel, when she stood forward as the Queen of Tragedy, to find instances of parallel excitement. With the sound of frantic and reiterated applause ringing in our ears it is impossible to doubt the sincerity of public conviction.”

In those days the Lyceum pit covered nearly three-fourths of the floor of the theatre ; seventy per cent. of the crowd that filled it nightly were young playgoers, and the actor himself was still in his 'thirties.

In 1878, he became the lessee of the theatre and engaged Ellen Terry as his “ leading lady,” and all through the 'eighties he was at the height of his popularity. His productions of “ The Merchant of Venice,” “ Othello ” (with the American tragedian, Edwin Booth, alternating with him the parts of the Moor and Iago), “ Romeo and Juliet,” “ Much Ado About Nothing,” and “ Faust ” had given his theatre a European standing second only to that of the *Comédie Française*. There were barricades in the vestibule to regulate the daily throng booking seats, and night after night the crowd waiting for the opening of the pit doors not only filled the covered passage leading from the Strand but extended across the pavement into the roadway, so that vehicles travelling eastward had to follow a curve to get past. For the first performance of “ Faust,” on December 19, 1885, a dozen young men had gathered at the pit doors at nine a.m. talking together in German. They were students from Heidelberg who had crossed land and sea to have the earliest possible view of the English actor in their countryman's creation ; and on all his “ first nights ” of that period the “ scrum ” outside the pit and gallery doors was so severe that it was no unusual thing for one or more of the participants to have to spend the night in Charing Cross Hospital with a fractured rib.

In the 'nineties a change slowly set in and the excitement of which the house was the centre began to decline. A Lyceum *première* was still a brilliant social event, but the generation of

playgoers which had seen the actor's rise to fame in the 'seventies had now begun to take him for granted, while the new circle of critics were mainly agitating themselves over the plays of Ibsen, Pinero and Oscar Wilde, the acting of Sarah Bernhardt, Eleanora Duse, and Ada Rehan, and the first sprightly runnings of Musical Comedy. For a time his acting as Wolsey, Becket and Corporal Brewster revived the old enthusiasm, but gradually the house lost its magnetism, and at last, on the afternoon of July 19, 1902—thirty-one years after his first appearance in "The Bells"—Henry Irving acted there for the last time, in the part of Shylock. On a February afternoon in 1904 I stood upon the Lyceum stage. In the centre of it, surrounding an auctioneer's pulpit, a crowd of men were smoking, spitting, and offering bids. I walked hither and thither on the old wooden floor, marvelled at its unevenness and its maze of "traps" and slits; and looked up to the tangle of ropes and the long rows of gas-jets of which one was lit to illuminate the scene below. Walls and doors, proscenium and wings, all bore the crude chalk scribblings of the auctioneer—"Lot 204," "Lot 205," and so on: and the more I stared around, and the longer I reflected that, after all, I had as much right to be there as Irving himself had possessed in the old days, the more miserable I felt. On my way at last to the stage-door, the many-medalled Irish soldier, Sergeant Barry by name, who for twenty-eight years had guarded it from his little box, leaned forward and said: "Isn't it a terruble end, sorr? To think of it! Here! Here, where the finest theatrical productions in the world were brought out! To see it all bein' sold like this! Have ye been in the Beefsteak Room? The room where Kings have dined? Now nothin' but a ghastly shell! Have ye seen that? By God, it's enough to break a man's heart!"

Even then, however, the actor had one London triumph still to come, and I almost think it was the greatest of all. In the summer of 1905 he appeared at Drury Lane for a season of six weeks' duration as Shylock, Becket, Louis XI., Mathias and Corporal Brewster. Ellen Terry was elsewhere; his company generally was very inferior to that of the old Lyceum days, and the scenery was quite ordinary. Yet every night the great house was crowded to excess by what was

predominantly another generation of young playgoers, who were seeing him for the first time, and who received him with an exact repetition of the fervours of the Lyceum audiences of thirty years before! I was present at several of these performances, and cannot forget either the almost undiminished power of the actor or the enthusiasm it evoked. I can still hear his voice in the last act of Tennyson's tragedy :

“ Tho' all the loud-lung'd trumpets upon earth  
Blared from the heights of all the thrones of her kings  
Blowing the world against me, I would stand  
Clothed with the full authority of Rome,  
Mail'd in the perfect panoply of faith,  
First of the foremost of their files who die  
For God, to people Heaven in the great day  
When God makes up His jewels.”

I can still see him as the wicked old French king mumbling his prayers to the images in his cap, and then muttering to them with an evil leer, “ If I thought you knew what is in my mind I'd burn ye! ” Considering that he was then in his 68th year and within a few months of his death, his conquest at Drury Lane of the young playgoers of 1905 was surely the most convincing of all the proofs of his quality.

Four months later he left London to go on tour. On his birthday in that year he had written in reply to a greeting from Sir Francis Burnand :

“ God bless you, and for all your good wishes. I don't know, all told, if you haven't had a better time than I have, and that your old age shouldn't have more in it than mine. After all, you can go on writing while the brain lasts ; even when your fingers give in you can dictate ; but the poor old player's life is limited by his bodily activity . . . ”

On an evening in October a friend called to see him in his hotel at Sheffield. He tapped at the door and a tired voice said “ Come in.” On entering, he found a figure huddled in a deep chair before the fire, and the face it showed in turning was death-like. In the following week the actor was at Bradford. On the Wednesday he was entertained to luncheon by the Mayor and Corporation and presented with an address, in replying to which he described himself as “ one the sands of whose life are running fast.” Only his indomitable will was keeping him going. Two nights later, on October the 13th, he acted in “ Becket ” before a house crowded in every part, and, so far as the audience could see, all was well ; but, within an hour of his



final bow before the curtain, a little group of grief-stricken men were standing around his dead body as it lay on a seat in the entrance-hall of his hotel. A week later he was buried in Westminster Abbey a few feet away from where the statue of Shakespeare stands.

Such was this man of humble Gloucestershire beginnings who did more to lift the stage of his day than any other actor in history. With the exceptions of "Faust" and "Becket," the plays in which he achieved his greatest success were by Shakespeare. From time to time to the end of his life he revived "The Bells" and other melodramas in which the intensity of his acting was probably comparable with that of Edmund Kean in similar productions : but it was as Hamlet, Shylock, Macbeth, Romeo, and Benedick that he enjoyed his greatest successes here and in his four visits to America. His Iago made the accompanying Othello of so fine an actor as Edwin Booth seem almost commonplace. Beside the deepening tragedy of his Romeo the Juliet even of Ellen Terry seemed to fade away. The varied graces of his Hamlet and the electrical force of his acting in the play-scene made an unforgettable date in many lives. One seems still to hear the roar from the audience which followed the Prince's triumphant cry as he rushed up the steps of the throne from which the panic-stricken King had fled.

Like most important artists, Irving had formed a style of his own. His stage-walk—the left foot stepping boldly forward, the right dragging after it along the floor—was one of his so-called mannerisms. Others were some of his vowel-sounds : his "all" could sound like oll, his "ghost" like gost, his "day" like deh, and so on. Now and then in passages of excitement he was difficult to follow. For example, in the banquet-scene of "Macbeth" he made the tyrant's outburst at the sight of Banquo's ghost an almost inarticulate torrent of sound ; and well do I remember, when the curtain had fallen upon that act, a neighbour turning to me and saying quietly : "Well, I think we may say that we have now seen Irving at his worst." Curiously, however, in many other and far longer scenes of anguish he made every word sound as clear as a bell and kept the audience spell-bound. For example, the last act of W. G. Wills's drama, "Eugene Aram," was practically a long

monologue of terror and remorse, yet in it there was not a moment in which the actor did not hold the spectators enthralled. One of the least expansive critics of that day, Mr. Dutton Cook, wrote of this scene in the *Pall Mall Gazette* : " The actor's self-abandonment to the passion of the situation, his powerful display of anguish and despair, are histrionic achievements of real note and obtained long-continued applause."

Irving carried into the nineteenth century Garrick's art of " making points "—drawing applause by a tone or a glance or both combined. In " Hamlet " he so spoke the sentence, " When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a hand-saw," that the house from stalls to gallery broke into acclaim. In Iago's soliloquy at the end of the first act of " Othello " he drew an audible gasp from the audience by slowly drawing his hands down his face after the words " How ? How ? How ? " and showing his eyes and whole countenance alive with the devilish scheme that had come into his mind. In " Charles I. " he won a nightly cheer from the loyal Victorians by the tone in which, in reply to Cromwell's remark, " The People's rights! And are *they* not divine ? " he answered :

" The people's rights, sir, are indeed divine.  
Not so the wrongs of rebels ! "

And, by way of contrast, who that saw him in that play does not remember his delivery, in the scene of the camp at Newark, of the betrayed King's speech to the traitor, Moray ?—

" I saw a picture once by a great master.  
It was an old man's head.  
Narrow and evil was its wrinkled front.  
Eyes close and cunning, a dull vulpine smile.  
'Twas called a Judas. Wide that painter erred.  
Judas had eyes like thine of candid blue ;  
His skin was smooth, his hair of youthful gold ;  
Upon his brow shone the white stamp of truth,  
And lips like thine did give the traitor kiss."

or, the pathos and dignity of the final scene in Whitehall in which, after kneeling at the feet of his wife and kissing her hands, he rose and, with the word " Remember ! " passed to his death.

In this and other such plays as " Dante," " Becket," and " Richelieu " he seemed to revive all the personal dignity of great historical figures. " Irving has faults," wrote Matthew Arnold in the middle 'eighties, " but he has a merit which

redeems them all—the merit of delicacy and distinction.” Off the stage and on the man was a personage. With his tall figure, fine face, and long hair there was no mistaking him in any company. Thackeray’s daughter, Lady Ritchie, caught sight of him once at Victoria station and wrote as follows : “ On his appearance the station porters rushed at him from every direction, and, looking very handsome and very melancholy, he indicated his luggage to them as though he was pointing to the grave of Ophelia ! ” The omniscient George Saintsbury, whose enthusiasms did not include playgoing, went to see him in the part of Iago and subsequently burst into a long article in praise of the performance, which concluded as follows :—

“ I rather hope Mr. Irving will not give us many more impersonations of this force. I should have to take to going very regularly to the theatre, which would cost me a great deal of time, some trouble, and not a little money.”

That article was Saintsbury’s first and last venture into dramatic criticism, and needless to say it is immensely worth reading. He reprinted it years after in one of his “ Scrap Books,” and, incidentally, it is the most masterly analysis of the character of the Moor’s Ancient which it has so far been my good fortune to read.

In Irving’s case, certainly, his work was his life. To him all the world was indeed a stage. A sublime sunset over Niagara only evoked from him the remark : “ What a pity Hawes Craven isn’t here ! ” (Hawes Craven was his principal scene painter). During his Lyceum years he spent most of the day as well as half the night in his theatre. Edwin Booth wrote the following description of the way in which he conducted his rehearsals :

“ Mr. Irving is despotic on the stage. At rehearsal his will is absolute law, whether it concern the entry of a Messenger with a letter or the reading of a letter by Miss Terry. From first to last he rules the stage with a will of iron, but also with a patience that is marvellous. He sits among his players watching every movement, listening to every word, constantly stopping anyone—Miss Terry as well as the Messenger—who does not do exactly right. He rises, explains the fault, and that part of the scene is immediately repeated. His patience holds out against any test. Over and over again the line is recited or a bit of the action done, until all is perfect. At the Lyceum one sees the perfection of stage discipline, and in Mr. Irving the perfection of stage patience.”

And with what hours of preliminary study of the play he must



have fortified himself for these coachings of his company! As he used to say: "I may not know all Shakespeare, but of any play of his which I present on the stage I know more than any other man in England."

On other topics than those of the theatre his "small talk" could be very small indeed. Andrew Lang once met him at a little dinner party and remarked afterwards: "If, as I am told, Irving is distinctly intellectual he concealed the circumstance, perhaps in pity of our frivolity." As two such famous talkers as James Russell Lowell and George du Maurier were among the five or six guests, it is quite likely that Irving found himself rather overpowered. One of the many stories told of him in the Garrick Club is that one night—or, rather one early morning—he sat there with lowered eyelids listening in silence to a long and enthralling account of Dr. Nansen's latest display of courage and hardihood in the Arctic region, and that, at last, being asked for his opinion of the hero of the hour, he opened his eyes and remarked quietly, "He seems able to stand the cold well." But, with a crony or cronies, he would talk till dawn, and after, on the Theatre and all thereunto appertaining: and when his club closed it was nothing for him to call a cab and take them home with him for further whisky, talk, and cigars. Mr. Lionel Brough once told me that it was on one of these occasions that Irving and his wife parted. He had taken Mr. Brough back with him at three in the morning; Mrs. Irving came to the top of the stairs and protested, until Irving at last quietly retired, packed a bag, and left the house, never to see his wife again, and apparently never again even to mention her name: though to the end of her long life, she received the handsome provision he had made for her.

On the other hand, his generosity to less fortunate members of his profession became a sort of household word. A young architectural student who had good looks, nice manners, and a pleasant voice, decided to drop architecture and become an actor. After the usual experience of small parts in the metropolis, rather better ones in the provinces, and the difficulties of trying to "manage" on an exiguous and erratic income, he applied to Irving for a part in a forthcoming Shakespearean production, and received an invitation to call at the theatre.

The part was duly given him, and as the interview was drawing near its end Irving sounded him very delicately as to his financial position and finished up by sending him away with thirty pounds "in advance," which he was never asked to repay. In the concluding chapter of his "Life of Henry Irving," the late Mr. Austin Brereton revealed that from the period when he took possession of the Lyceum in August, 1878, to the end of his last season in London in June, 1905, over two and a quarter million pounds flowed into his box-office. For years, however, while money was literally pouring into his theatre at one end it was pouring out of it again at the other on scene-painters, musicians, playwrights, costumiers, beneficences of every sort, and a prodigious salary-list; and the provisions of his will were only met by the sale of his personal effects and the high prices they realized in the wave of emotion caused by his death.

At its height his career gave a dignity to the whole British theatre. He became its recognized leader and its public voice, and lifted it to an eminence it had never before known. There was not a playhouse of any importance in London which did not seem to have gathered an added status from the prestige of the Lyceum. On such nights of excitement as those which saw the final retirement of the Bancrofts at the Haymarket and the end of the long and historical management of John Hollingshead at the Gaiety the climax came with the entry of Henry Irving to deliver the words of farewell. He re-established Shakespeare on the stage, and against that finest of backgrounds all the minor activities of the theatre—modern comedy, drama, melodrama, farce, and even burlesque—rose to a higher level than they had known for many years. He raised the public taste. The great Master of Balliol of that day publicly added his name to those of Burbage, Betterton, Garrick, Edmund Kean, and Macready as one of the greatest in the "bede-roll" of our stage. He used to describe himself at the end of his little speeches to the audience after the fall of the curtain on outstanding occasions as "your faithful loving servant." His statues to-day in the heart of the City of London and at Charing Cross are lasting reminders of all that he was and did.

## THUS SPAKE MRS. GABBET

BY ALISON MOURNE

“O H there you are at last, Ulmer. You’re dreadfully late. How many museums and galleries did you take in to-day? Sit down and I’ll tell you what I did. This morning after you’d gone, I decided that since we were to be in London for some time—a coupla weeks anyway—I’d rather like to join one of the women’s clubs here, just as a temporary member. I had my membership card from the Yerba Buena club with me, showing me to be a member in good standing with all my dues paid, and I thought that if I showed that to them, any nominating committee of any club anywhere would only be too glad to welcome me, just as we would do ourselves in the Yerba Buena if any stranger ever wanted to join us temporarily. I figured that whatever I paid for the privilege of becoming a temporary member would be a darn good investment whichever way you looked at it. For one thing, take lunches; they are always so much better in those kinda places, and you never have to stand in line waiting for a table. Then I’d have somewhere comfortable to sit and rest while you went the round of the museums. (Lord, what you *see* in those places I can’t figure out; they hurt my feet.) Also I could get a looksee at the new books and magazines without having to buy them, so that when I went home I could prove to everybody that though I’d bin abroad I’d kept up with what is going on in the world. And most of all, I’d be able to tell our members that I’d really bin nominated to join one of London’s high-toned clubs. I planned to work my impressions of it into the travel talk that the educational committee would want me to give on my return. This was at the back of my mind, too; I might get the chance to give a lecture or two over here, then I could tell the folks how we run things in the Yerba Buena club, and invite them all to pay us a visit the next time they are in San Francisco. Because



a little seed of kindness takes only a second to plant . . . and before you know it there's a five hundred per cent. return on your outlay.

"Of course, I oughta have known better than to go into the place at all. My dear, it was a regular tomb! Not a sound anywhere . . . no one about . . . no reception committee member to welcome me . . . I tell you I never hope to hear such quiet again until I'm six feet under the ground! When I remembered our own gay lonnge hall, with those brightly coloured chairs and tables and that cute cocktail bar at the end and Manuel in his white coat shaking 'em up, and people laughing and talking all over the place . . . I just felt sorry for those folks there, that's all!

"But that was nothing to what I found out afterwards. These English certainly don't know the first thing about running a club! Would you believe it? They wouldn't accept me as a member! At first I thought that maybe they were prejudiced against my name—you know at home how careful we are what foreigners we let into the club—so I explained that my mother was English, and was brought to California when she was a tiny baby, and as for you, you were a Native Son of the Golden West (can you feature it, she had never even *heard* of that organization?) and even you could drum up an aunt who had married a Canadian, so that we were not really foreigners at all.

"But it seemed that it wasn't anything to do with my name; they just didn't accept guest memberships; there was no provision in their constitution for such a thing. (So much worse for your constitution, I told her.) Not even when I gave her a spiel about International Goodwill and how we clubwomen should accept its challenge because the peace of the world rests in our hands, and after all we are the two mightiest peoples on earth, and should keep our hands clasped across the sea . . . not even then would she relent. Rules were rules; you know how these English are. Sure is the land of behave here. I asked if I could interview the nominating committee and put my case before them, but she insisted that they had no such thing! No nominating committee! I ask you! I *ask* you! What a way to run things! No wonder they can't pay their war debts!

"Anyway, I went on, even if you won't allow me to join the club, would you tell me something about the way it is run? I might be able to take back a few slick idears to San Francisco. (You see, I knew that our president was looking out for new idears for next season and our members would fall for anything that we could advertise as coming from London.) But she only raised her eyebrows as high as they would go, and says she:

"Idears? How we run . . . I don't quite . . . just what did you wish to know?"

"Well for one thing, I said, I'd like to know what sorta stunts you put on when you want to raise money?"

"Stunts?' she echoed. 'Stunts?' (You could tell she had never even heard the word before, the poor fish.) 'Oh . . . er . . . we don't go in for things like that; our members pay dues.'

"Well for crying out loud, so do ours, I replied, but what do you do when you want to raise the wind for somep'n special, like Santa Claus Fund, or the Flood Relief or the new Clubhouse?"

"'If we wished to do anything of that sort,' she assured me, 'we would open a fund, and any member who wished to subscribe could do so.'

"Heavens! I said, you sure don't seem to know how to get hold of money over here. Haven't you learned yet that you can get three times as much out of a person if you put on a cute stunt and charge him admission to see it? Now our club last year sent two hundred dollars to the Flood Relief, five hundred to the Community Chest, and we've got more than a thousand dollars sewn up in good stocks biding the time when we start to build a new clubhouse. I know all this because I was chairman of the financial committee.

"My land, Ulmer, that secretary was a strange girl! She didn't seem the least bit impressed by anything I told her. I'll have to admit she was polite, but that's all. Then I asked her how her members stood on the subject of committees.

"'Stand . . . on . . .?' she echoed. (As an echo, she was good.) 'I'm afraid . . .'

"Well, this is the way we run things, I began. (I thought she might just as well learn how a proper club was run.) We have eleven committees: decoration, reception, entertainment,

refreshments, membership, financial (that's the one I was chairman of), music, educational, drama, garden and parliamentary. (They assess us for fines if we don't attend the meetings, or if we break any of the rules.) These committees run the club; they take care of everything, and they are responsible for everything. They arrange the day's events and goodness! there's somep'n doing every minute! In the mornings there is Bridge, of course, and lectures and round tables and classes of all sorts, so you couldn't belong to the Yerba Buena club and not be a well-educated lady. Last winter I took glove-making twice a week, then a course of five lectures on Flower Arrangement. After I finished that Mrs. Birdie L. Warren gave us three mornings on 'Hitler and his position in Europe,' and during January Dr. Benjamin O. Farrenstein talked on 'Art and the Cosmic Soul.' Then we devoted a morning to the works of contemporary novelists, and one to Kipling because he had recently died, and one to Noel Coward's plays, and another to Emil Ludwig's biographies. . . . oh no, I forgot, we didn't do him; we hadn't time. . . .

"Now, of course, I said, this isn't all we did; oh my! no; I'm only telling you a little bit to give you an idear . . .

"After lunch the Bridge room is always so full that they have to set extra tables all over the place, and three times a week the dramatic or the music sections put on a show, and every Tuesday there are our famous 'Afternoons.' They really are famous. Last season the series was called 'Afternoons in Other Countries.' There was Czechoslovakia one week, and the next China, and the next Sweden, and the next the Hawaiian Islands. We took in practically the whole world. Usually we get natives from the countries (we have them all in San Francisco, you know) to come and dance or sing and play on their native instruments. They're glad to come; they always tell us we are *such* an enthusiastic audience. And of course we ask them if they would care to stay for refreshments afterwards. It's up to the refreshment committee to scrounge round and serve a dish belonging to the country we are studying. Once, though, they couldn't find anything suitable to serve at that hour of the day . . . I mean, with coffee or cocktails . . . it seems that in China (or was it Japan? I forget which—but never mind) they don't go in



much for dessert or things like that, so Mrs. Hosk (she's the chairman) had some little cookies made with pink icing on top, and she called them Ho-Tal-Ling cookies, and was it a clever idear! . . . everyone thought they were a real oriental delicacy. The joke is that our president's name is Hotaling, Mrs. Andrew K. Hotaling, Jr. Wasn't that a kick? Oh we have the *most* fun! You should have seen us on our former president's birthday! We gave her a dinner, and as she came into the dining room we all stood up and sang Happy Birthday, Madam President! Happy Birthday to you! Then for dessert they brought in a gorgeous cake with fifty-five candles on it! And, Ulmer, she doesn't know to this day how we found out her age!) After dinner everyone presented her with the most heavenly bouquets! Everything from baskets as high as my shoulder and magnificent sheaths too big to hold on your arm down to lies of tropical flowers specially rushed over by the clipper plane from Honolulu! And speeches galore (far too many I thought, but you know how some people love the sound of their own voices) some of the members composed verses and read them, and one member sang 'I Love You Truly' while she presented her floral piece, the sweetest blossoms made in the form of a P., for president, you know. We loved the way the newspapers wrote up the affair; they said we placed our loving offerings at Mrs. Wells' feet in an impulsive burst of loyalty such as was not often seen. We all agreed when it was over that friendship is the most precious by-product of club activity.

"We have our very own motto: 'Yerba Buena For Ever,' I told her, and our own cheer . . . I'd let you hear it, only this . . . this gloomy room doesn't seem the right kinda place for cheering. . . .!"

"'I'm afraid we don't do things in just that way,' she began.

"No, I said, I can see you don't. As far as I can make it out, you might all be dead and buried.

"'Our members seem quite well satisfied,' she said, 'I am sure they would not wish for any alteration to be made in the conduct of the club. Our house committee . . .'

"Say! I caught her up. What was that you mentioned? House committee? That's a new one to me . . . how does it function?"

“ ‘It settles any point of internal management that may require a decision.’

“Now that’s an idear, I said. I thought I’d get at least *one* idear if I stayed here long enough. House committee; At the first chance I get I’m going to propose that we have one of those at the club! (It occurred to me that if I could get Mrs. Sidewilck and Mrs. Richards and Alvine Flaherty to serve on it, it might do me some good when the elections come round next March.)

“Thanks so much for the tip, I told her (the secretary, I mean); I’ll get us a house committee at Yerba Buena if I have to turn handsprings to do it.

“Well—it didn’t seem to be much use to try and talk to the woman any longer; she was evidently made of granite through and through—so unresponsive—so I bade her good-day and came out of that chilly tomb as fast as I could. (Boy! I could have done with one of Manuel’s cocktails just then!) And as I came down the steps, what do you think I did? I hummed our club song . . . ‘Hail, Our Dearest Club, Our Happy Days With Thee . . .’”

## DISCORD IN YUGOSLAVIA.

BY JOHN KEYSER.

IN one important respect Yugoslavia differs from the majority of the Danubian States. Neither from without nor from within is she directly menaced by the Nazi bogey. Dr. Schacht's economic policy certainly exercised a detrimental effect upon the commercial structure of the country. But the tentacles of the Nazi monster have not spread their hideous embrace around Yugoslavia as they have, in varying degree, round Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania. In all other respects, however, Yugoslavia has abundantly shared the complaints of her neighbours. The habitual instability and uncertainty of the post-War years common to the smaller States of South-Eastern Europe, discovered a most fertile soil in Yugoslavia. The continual quarrels between the Serbs and the Croats have materially prevented the consummation of that inner unity without which no State can progress. They are as acute to-day as they were twenty years ago. From Radic to Macek, from Pasic to Stoyadinovic, through democracy and dictatorship they have persisted. Only the knowledge, equally shared by Serbs and Croats, that divided they would fall, has served to hold together the flimsy fabric of the State.

This perpetual strife and the almost entire absence of support for the Stoyadinovic *régime* have contributed to the complexity of the present internal political position in Yugoslavia. The balance-sheet of the government is most unfavourable. On the credit side only one entry appears. This is entitled Yugoslav Radical Union. It has three sub-divisions. The first is the Radical Party of Dr. Stoyadinovic. Though formerly this party constituted the mainstay of the Government, even its ranks have now become thinned as a result of the dissatisfaction over the Concordat. The other two items are, Father Korosec and his Slovenes and M. Spaho and his Bosnian Moslems. The



value of their support can be written off to almost one hundred per cent. In the elections of May, 1935, they both figured largely on the opposition lists. Loud was their disapproval of the Government's anti-democratic methods. One month later they were both to be found on the side of Dr. Stoyadinovic's newly-formed government. Rarely, if ever, has such a complete abjurement been witnessed. This voluntary adhesion to a policy well-nigh diametrically opposed to their fundamental interests, indicates the opportunist motives which prompted it.

On the debit side the entries are more numerous. Foremost among the Opposition Groups comes the Peasant Democrat Coalition. This "Zagreb Opposition" is composed of Dr. Macek's Croat Peasants and the Serb Independent Democrats under M. Pribicevic. The latter—commonly referred to as the Trans-Danubian Serbs, who were former Hungarian citizens of Croatia—have been closely allied with the Croats since 1927. Recently, a union has been effected with the second main Opposition combination consisting of Radicals, Democrats and Agrarians in Belgrade. These three parties together form what is known as the United Opposition. On September 15th, 1937, they came to an agreement with the Peasant Democrat Coalition. There emerged an opposition *bloc* which, for all the joints in its armour, nevertheless must be held to possess considerable potential striking force. Of lesser consequence are the three right-wing groups. Two former Prime Ministers, General Zivkovic and M. Jevtic, lead the Yugoslav Nationals. Then there is the so-called Hodzera Group of spurious Fascists and "Zbor," the genuine Fascist party of Leotic. These three extremist parties demand a complete return to dictatorial government. In all other aspects but their common dislike of the present régime their policy is the direct opposite of the democratic Opposition.

Such, in outline, is the present alignment of political parties in Yugoslavia. The old antagonisms endure. From time to time they are supplemented by fresh animosity. The most poignant example of this was the ill-fated Concordat. Although the Prime Minister was wise enough to recognize his mistaken line of action and to withdraw the Bill, yet his wisdom, coming after the event, has not in itself sufficed to repair the far-reaching

damage which his previous adoption of it created. The deep-seated objection to the Concordat on the part of the Orthodox Serbs was based on the threat to their prerogatives implied in the increased privileges to be accorded to the Roman Catholic Church. The Opposition Agreement of last Autumn was a direct outcome of the Concordat affair. Its main purpose is to overthrow the Government. It will probably succeed.

As to the Croats, their position has been strengthened by the new Agreement. Although there is no explicit mention in it of their demand for autonomy, yet a consolidation of anti-governmental forces means for them a step nearer their goal. The alpha and omega of that goal is full self-government. But in order to attain this desired object, it would first be necessary to abolish the Constitution of 1931 and to replace it by one which restored democratic principles as a preliminary to the establishment of a Federal State.

The Stoyadinovic government has so far rigidly opposed any alteration to the present semi-dictatorial Constitution for two main reasons. The first is that they conceive it to be their fundamental duty to hand over intact to the boy-King, when he attains his majority at the age of eighteen—that is in 1941—the Constitution enacted by his father. Such an argument is indefensible. On the one hand, it is impossible to imagine that a lad of eighteen would be capable either immediately or within a measurable time of deciding a matter of such deep significance and of such a complex character. On the other hand, it would be of far greater value to present the young King with a situation in which this highly vexed problem had already been solved. In fact this reason is little else but an excuse.

The second main objection, however, is prompted by a more reasonable apprehension for the security of the State. It is set forth in the September Agreement of the Opposition parties that they would proceed to elect a Constituent Assembly which would vote the new Constitution “by a majority among the Deputies of each of the three peoples—Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.” The attainment of so great a measure of harmony between the three peoples would be likely to prove an almost hopeless task. In any case there would certainly ensue a prolonged period of uncertainty and probably even of chaos.

Even so, this should not preclude an attempt to discover some method of modifying a Constitution which has become generally unpopular and which has lost its vital significance since the death of its author. Moreover, it is highly improbable that King Alexander, whose democratic principles were above reproach, had envisaged the 1931 Constitution as anything but a measure of temporary expediency.

What practical steps may be taken to bridge the gulf which still separates the Croats from the Serbs? Probably at no other time since the formation of Yugoslavia has there existed so urgent a necessity of getting to grips with this problem. Never, with the possible exception of the time of Radic's death has the split been so complete. At the moment there is the added danger of an imminent fall of the Government. The uncertainty as to its successor and the likelihood that, whichever party or combination of parties that may happen to be, a period of constitutional drift would accompany any conceivable change, tend to increase the existing difficulties.

The most immediately valuable line for the Government to adopt would be the reaffirmation, if only in principle, of the equality of rights accorded to the Croats by the Pact of Corfu. Although this equality was recognized by the Vidovdan Constitution of 1921, under its terms the administration was centralized in Belgrade and the conception of autonomy thereby disappeared. It is from that moment that the intensification of Croat dissatisfaction and disillusionment dates. Certainly, unless this fundamental acceptance of the terms upon which the Croats agreed to form the joint State are reasserted, no progress towards the peaceful co-operation of the two leading nationalities of Yugoslavia will ever be made. Moreover, it is a step which, in their own interests, the Serbs are bound to take. Continued refusal to do so will undoubtedly terminate in the final disruption of the nation. On the grounds of justice there is no valid excuse which the Serbs can advance for their unwillingness to take this step.

Secondly, Dr. Macek would be more favourably disposed towards the Government if an agrarian policy more in line with the interests of the peasants were introduced. Approximately 80 per cent. of the Yugoslav people are engaged in



agriculture. The density of the agricultural population reaches the very high figure of 120 head to 100 Hectares (or 247 Acres) compared with only 78 in Hungary, 64 in Austria and 52 in Germany. Despite the obvious importance of agriculture in the country and the agrarian reform introduced after the war, yet only one-fifth of the agricultural population is land-owning. The remainder are wage-earners. Even small-holders are forced to work on bigger estates. Conditions are so bad that in 1936, agricultural wages were as low as 6—7 Dinars (about 7d.) for an 18-hour day. Less than 1 per cent. of the total State Revenue is devoted to agricultural interests. It is essential that these wretched conditions should be improved if the peasants are to be satisfied. Much remains to be done in the direction of increasing the extent of cultivable land, by reclamation of bogs and marshes, by a considered policy of internal colonization and by studying the future organization of agricultural credits.

If progress were effected in these directions, it might be possible to prevail upon the Croats to reduce their absolute demand for full self-government to something more in the nature of administrative and social autonomy. At present, the Croats are determined to accept no compromise. If, however, their general treatment were improved, it is conceivable that they would be prepared to limit the severity of their demands.

In any case the Croats are determined to get justice. They are at present in a sounder position with their policy of passive patience than the Serbs with their active disunion. Authoritarian rule is, on the whole, alien to the Serb character. Many of them, including Government officials, recently expressed to the writer their disagreement in principle with dictatorial methods. They have been led into their acquiescence of them, partly through fear as to the possible consequences if they were relaxed, but mainly, because they consider them to be the sole means of maintaining their supremacy in the State, which they look upon as their natural right. Yet, the more they procrastinate, the greater becomes the danger to the State. Even now, if Yugoslavia were involved in a war, the Croat soldiers would refuse to fight. It is in the interests of the Government

to take immediate stock of its position, which cannot be described as anything but precarious. In fact, apart from the support of a number of officials in the administration and a section of the Radicals, its continued existence is dependent upon the loyalty of the army and of the police and, in certain measure, to the success of its foreign policy—although that is more theoretical than actual.

Dr. Stoyadinovic has systematically pursued a policy of friendship with all States. It might almost be said that he has been playing his friends off one against the other. This policy, if viewed from the stand-point of the various agreements, pacts and treaties which he has contracted, appears to have been entirely successful. Yet, there is a considerable danger that, in consequence, Dr. Stoyadinovic may have been blinded by the glitter of his apparent success. The Little Entente edifice, though still standing, is on the verge of decay—the more so since Yugoslavia's advances to the anti-League Powers. The partnership in the Balkan Entente was badly shaken as a result of the Yugoslav-Bulgarian Agreement. The Treaty with Italy has in no way overcome the intense antipathy of the two peoples to one another. It needed far more than the mere signature of an unpopular Government to a document to alter so deeply-rooted a feeling. This feeling was forcibly demonstrated on M. Delbos' arrival in Belgrade when the streets echoed with cries of "Down with Fascism, Germany, Italy and the Government!" With France, although Dr. Stoyadinovic was able, on the occasion of his last visit, to prolong his Pact of Friendship, he did not achieve that "something more" for which he had hoped. Moreover, any improvement in Franco-Yugoslav relations resulting from M. Delbos' visit to Belgrade was cleverly counterbalanced by the Rome and Berlin visits between which it was sandwiched. With Germany relations are cordial, but it is a cordiality dictated by economic necessity and political fear. In the case of Hungary, the best that can be said is that Yugoslavia has been less antagonistic than either Czechoslovakia or Rumania, probably because she stands to lose less from Hungarian revisionist claims than either of her two partners in the Little Entente. The recent noticeable improvement in Little Entente-Hungarian relations was checked

by Rumania. Negotiations towards a *rapprochement* were postponed pending elections and a change of government in that country, but the obstacles have increased owing to the character of the new Cabinet.

With Austria, Poland, Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia is on good terms—despite the fact that she has never recognized the latter State—but in not one of these cases is the friendship anything but essentially superficial. Indeed it seems that Yugoslavia is fast qualifying for the description, “A friend to everybody is a friend to nobody.” If she has to fight a war she will probably realize the perils of having contracted shallow friendships which can so easily revert to enmities. In the words of Cato, “It is better to have harsh foes than those friends who seem sweet.”



## THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND REFUGEES

BY SIR JOHN HOPE SIMPSON

THERE are a million refugees in the world to-day. The largest class is that of Russians scattered over the countries of Eastern Europe, Germany, France and the Far East. Next in numbers come the Armenians, chiefly in Syria, Greece and France. The volume of German refugees is already large, and is increasing, and fears are entertained that a wave of Jewish emigration from Danzig, Poland, Rumania and possibly Hungary is probable in the not distant future. The problem is already one of great magnitude, and shows little sign of diminishing and the proceedings of the 1937 League Assembly prove that the nations are well aware of its importance.

In 1921 Dr. Nansen was appointed as League High Commissioner for refugee work, and since that time the connection between the League and the organizations dealing with this question has been continuous and close. It was with powerful assistance from Geneva that Greece and Bulgaria were able to raise the funds required for settlement of their refugees. The administration of these funds was entrusted to agencies appointed by and subject to the control of the Council of the League. In the case of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission, as in that of the Commissioner appointed to direct the settlement of Bulgarian refugees, quarterly progress reports were submitted to the Economic Section of the League and examined by the League Council, at whose meetings members of the Commissions attended to supply such additional information or explanations as might be necessary.

It has been an accepted principle, and was indeed laid down in a formal resolution in 1930, that the League is not and cannot be responsible for the humanitarian activities connected with relief. League action has consistently been confined to

the political and juridical aspects of the question, and its expenditure to the costs of administration of the Nansen Office and of the office of the High Commissioner for refugees from Germany, both of which are subject to its control, and submit their budgets and accounts for scrutiny and approval by the Council. In two cases only, those of the Assyrians of Iraq and of the Saarlanders, has the League departed from this principle, and allotted funds for relief and for settlement. In these two cases the League is subject to a special responsibility arising from its own action. In all other cases, relief and settlement are an obligation on the private organizations dealing with refugee work.

During the period when the refugee services were controlled by the International Labour Organization (1925-1929), the refugee problem was regarded rather as one of unemployment than as a political matter. At that time it was anticipated that the mass of Armenian refugees in Greece and Bulgaria would be transferred to and settled in the Armenian Republic of Erivan, a constituent but self-governing republic of the Soviet Union. It was also considered that the Armenian settlement in Syria would be complete and the settlers safe, as there was no expectation that the mandate would be abandoned at an early date. It was also hoped with confidence that the Assyrians would be settled in Iraq (the Iraq Treaty which alarmed the Assyrians and led to their escape into Syria, was not signed till 1930). On the assumption that these schemes were successfully carried through, the only large body of refugees remaining was the Russian. Vigorous and successful efforts were made to obtain employment for them, and the very success led to a belief that the general problem of the refugees could and would be solved in this way within a few years.

The Resolution of the Assembly in 1930, which transferred control of the Nansen Office from the International Labour Organization to the Secretariat, entrusted to the latter the political and legal protection of refugees, but left to the Nansen office that humanitarian work which had consistently been the responsibility of Dr. Nansen, in his capacity of High Commissioner of the League. In 1930 the Assembly shared the optimism of the Secretariat and of the International Labour Organization as to the limited period in which the problem of

the refugees would find complete solution. It consequently passed a Resolution recommending the adoption of a plan to wind up the work of the Nansen Office in 1939, and the Assembly of 1931 by resolution advanced the date for liquidation of that office to 1938. The 31st December, 1938, was also fixed as the date as the mandate of the present High Commissioner appointed to deal with German refugees.

Various facts combined to compel the League to reconsider its decision. The plans for the transfer of Armenians to Erivan, and of Assyrians overseas fell through. Unemployment among White Russian refugees continued. The volume of emigration of refugees from Germany reached large proportions. Thus, when the question came up for discussion in the Assembly of 1936 a resolution was adopted indicating material change in the policy of the League. It was then decided that, although the previous decision as to the closure of the Nansen office and of that of the High Commissioner for refugees coming from Germany should continue effective, this action did not imply that the League had lost its interest in the problem. The resolution recommended that in 1938 at latest the whole refugee problem should be examined, and that general principles should be adopted to guide the League in its future action.

Valiant efforts were made by the Sixth Committee of this year's Assembly (of which Lord Cranborne was Rapporteur) to obtain unanimity in favour of a recommendation that the League should not dissociate itself from protection of the refugees, though the offices should be liquidated as previously resolved. This view was accepted by every member save one, M. Stein, representative of Soviet Russia, who insisted on a literal interpretation of the original resolution, which, in his view, implied entire abstention of the League from any form of protection of the refugees. Efforts to induce a change of attitude on the part of the Soviet representative were unsuccessful, and in the end the Sixth Committee submitted its report to the Assembly of the League, with one dissentient voice. That report included a draft Resolution, recommended for acceptance by the Assembly, of which the second Chapter recorded the continued existence of the refugee problem, the obligation on the League for political and legal protection,



and the decision to continue without interruption the work carried on up to the present time under the auspices of the League. In the fourth Chapter it went on to instruct the Secretary General, in consultation with the President of the governing body of the Nansen office, and the High Commissioner for refugees coming from Germany, to prepare a plan of action for the work of assistance to refugees after December 31st, 1938.

Had this draft Resolution been presented to the Assembly, it would probably not have received the unanimous support requisite to pass it, owing to the opposition of the representative of the U.S.S.R. The matter was, moreover, complicated by a subsidiary question. The Nansen office required a supplementary allocation in its budget for the ensuing year. To this request the Soviet representative had, in Committee, expressed his opposition. It required unanimous support in the Assembly. Were the supplementary credit not voted, the major question would become academic, as the office would have exhausted its funds and been compelled to close down long before 31st December, 1938, its appointed date of demise.

Faced with this dilemma the French representative on the Committee, supported by the representatives of Belgium, the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia—although he and they had voted in favour of the report drafted by the Committee—proposed an amendment to that report, when it came before the Assembly. The proposal was made in an effort to prevent an adverse decision of the Assembly which might prove final, and to secure more time in which to overcome the opposition of Soviet Russia. The amendment recorded the opinion that the whole body of problems raised by the previous decisions of the assembly requires reconsideration, and asked the Council to prepare or arrange for the preparation of a scheme for international assistance to refugees before the next Assembly. In other words it asked for postponement of decision for a year.

The amendment was the subject of criticism on the part of a number of representatives, who had been on the Committee, notably by Lord Cranborne. When put to the vote, of 47 States represented, 25 voted in favour of the amendment, 22 abstained from voting, and the amendment was declared carried unanimously. The abstentions included the

delegations of Great Britain, of all Dominions except the Irish Free State, and of Soviet Russia.

The result was a diplomatic triumph for the representative of Soviet Russia. Not only did he escape from solitude, which could not fail to be invidious, as unique opponent of the original report and draft resolution. He succeeded at the same time in driving a wedge into the solid phalanx in its favour, so that not only France, but Norway, whose representative had proposed the course embodied in the report, voted for an amendment which was not accepted by Great Britain.

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for the action of the Soviet representative, who not only failed to vote against the amendment, but also refrained from voting against the supplementary credit for the Nansen Office, which he had originally opposed. Whatever may be the reasons, the result is clear. The Nansen Office has secured the funds necessary to enable it to function until its close in December, 1938, but it will only be in September or October, 1938, that a final decision will be taken as to the form of future assistance, if any, by the League to the refugees. This will leave at best a short and inadequate three months in which to organize the necessary machinery.

Nor is it at all certain that the Assembly will accept unanimously any resolution implying continuing responsibility of the League for the work of protection of refugees. Soviet Russia has not been alone in her critical attitude in past years, and it may well be that past critics may revert to their original attitude. Yet criticism in the past has, as a rule, been mainly directed, not against the League's rôle as protector of refugees, but rather against the actual machinery which directly handled the problem. In the case of Italy hostility appears to have dated from Dr. Nansen's outspoken condemnation of the Corfu incident. Soviet Russia might be prepared to approve continuance of League protection, were that protection withdrawn from Russian refugees, whom, in certain cases, possibly not without some reason, it suspects of intrigue against the existing Government of Russia.

It should be unthinkable that the League will wash its hands of refugee work and disclaim responsibility for these unfortunates

in future. It is the influence of the League alone that has effected such improvement in their political position as has been apparent the past sixteen or seventeen years. The Convention of 1933 and the Arrangement of 1936, to mention only two international instruments which afford to refugees a measure of political protection in certain countries, were the result of Conferences summoned by the League. A further conference, to deal specially with the political and legal position of German refugees is being called early in 1938.

Though it is true that in some countries the position of the refugees has been improved in recent years, much remains to be done before other nations of the world afford to their refugees the privileges offered to them by China. In that country the refugee is granted a passport, as a stateless person, which is visa-ed in the same way as a national passport for foreign travel. The difference between the two lies in the period of validity. The stateless Chinese passport is renewable each year. In China, in addition, the refugee has the same right to employment as a Chinese national, he is at liberty to travel in China, to own real property, and to conduct his business. The Chinese courts are open to him. He is indeed in the same position as any foreigner who does not enjoy extraterritorial rights.

That is the ideal at which past efforts of the League have aimed. Those efforts have been only partially successful, but continued exercise of the League's influence is the one hope of general progress towards the ideal. Should the League decide to disinterest itself in the refugee problem, a section of the human race, which is in any case very wretched, will be bereft of the measure of assistance which it now enjoys, and will in truth become entirely defenceless and hopeless. The problem is not one which can safely be left to the unstimulated good will of the individual State, and by renouncing its responsibility and its duty in this matter the League would strike an effective blow at its own reputation, which has already suffered so much in the past from avoidance of patent responsibilities.



## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

**T**WO wars go on ; the lesser in Spain limited in scope by weather conditions which might well have barred all activity : but both sides have shown heroic determination in the fight which centres about Teruel. There has been much less talk than before about foreign contingents ; plainly both sides have created formidable forces of their own. And for the present the safety of Europe at large seems less menaced. General Franco's evident unwillingness to destroy Madrid by shell-fire points to confidence that he can achieve his ends without this dreadful expedient : but the evacuation of nearly half-a-million people from the capital signifies that attack in force there is looked for when weather softens.

### **The Rule of Slaughter**

The Far Eastern struggle involves great European interests of which the British are the greatest. At any modern period, up to 1914, European intervention in such a case, would have been certain, and would probably have been the intervention of all Europe. Now, two great European Powers are openly backing Japan in the aggression upon China—and covertly in the defiance of British, French and American rights. Conquest of China goes on, and the wider it spreads, the more ample resources will be needed over a long period to hold what has been won.

It is not yet certain that Japan will continue to have a free hand. President Roosevelt's utterances make it clear that the United States Government is considering gravely how far a policy of abstention continues to be possible. There is little doubt that the United States and the British Empire acting in concert could render Japan's task all but impossible by refusing to supply oil, rubber, iron and other essentials—one of which is said to be tungsten. But equally there is little doubt that Germany and Italy would seek to procure them and supply

Japan indirectly ; or that Japan would retaliate by seizing whatever British or American property lay within her grasp—and this would include Hongkong. These are formidable dangers to face ; and President Roosevelt has at the same time to provide against the probable figure of eight million unemployed.

On the other, there is comfort to be derived from a letter published in the *Irish Times*, quoting the poet Tagore's reply to a group of Indian merchants in Tokyo. They had asked him to oppose a movement spreading among the masses in India for a boycott of Japanese goods. He wrote :

" I know that in appealing to me you have reckoned on my high opinion of the Japanese ; for I, and all Asia with me, once admired Japan and cherished great hopes that Asia had at last found in Japan the answer to the West ; that the new power of Japan would be devoted to safeguarding the civilization of the East against foreign interests. All this is now changed, and when one nation invades the territory of another to-day, the wrong it commits does not consist merely of its imperialist ambition, but in slaughtering of human beings with less discrimination than a pestilence. And when the conscience of the whole world is aroused to indignation by this wrong, and cries out in protest, how can I oppose this just protest ? "

Admittedly, the world has run into a packet of bad weather it is not nice that a new group of initials has entered into our list of familiar abbreviations. A.R.P. : Air Raid Precautions :

**The League** a pretty present for the New Year. Even if  
     can physical apprehension does not weigh heavy on  
**Prevail** many of us, all are depressed by what looks like the crumbling away of high hopes. As an antidote, two public utterances have been extremely valuable. One was a letter from Mr. George Barnes, the old Labour leader, who wrote to *The Times* recalling how Peel's proposal of a central police force was granted. Locality after locality denounced this arbitrary invasion of local sovereignties as a conspiracy against freedom. Now, we have for so long taken the police force for granted that Mr. Barnes has the appearance of a romancer, inventing neat analogies to show that the Society of Nations also must have a force at hand to deal with marauders.

But Mr. Barnes was making a case with admirable humour—and good humour for the creation of something which the world has not yet had. General Smuts, speaking at the Cape, but speaking to the civilized world, condemned valiantly all

thoughts of deserting an enterprise to which the civilized world had set its hand, and which marked, as he held, the highest point to which civilized humanity had sought to attain. We have all noticed that denouncers of the League of Nations pride themselves on a virile contempt for the futile pacifists who uphold that effete institution. Now, if ever there was a man who showed in fullness the virile qualities of mind and body, General Smuts is that man—soldier, statesman and philosopher. Soldier, he has been a leader in two wars, and in each faced the limits of bodily endurance and danger. Statesman, coming out of a small nation, he has done more than any man to graft that small nation into another stock—and has done it after a bitter war between races. He has been high in the counsels of Europe at a supreme moment, and has gone back from them to perfect his own work of reconciliation in politics; yet all the while his mind has been busy with the abstractions of philosophy. When such a man tells us plainly that to renounce what we undertook in the League would be a desertion and a betrayal—for that is what his finding comes to—we may disregard the clamour of clubmen who “always told you so,” and even the oracles who respond sympathetically to Signor Mussolini.

One thing ought to be quite clear now. If the League's existence were not felt as an inconvenience by States with grasping designs, Germany and Italy would not be at such pains to detach other members from it. It is nonsense to say that Italy's secession increased the weakness; in truth, the presence of a member continuously disloyal to the whole purposes of the League to effect their purposes within a limited range—to protect the fabric of Europe. If the will to use the League is firm, the League's existence is in no danger: but the will must be there.

If protection by the League was felt to be an assured backing for the Little Entente, Rumania would scarcely to-day be entering into a flirtation with Italy. Probably, however,

**The Way** this is regarded in Rumania as an extra insurance,  
**of the** and Rumania's withdrawal from the League of  
**World** Nations is unlikely. Then there are Austria and Hungary, which it is said Italy also hopes to detach. Hungary will scarcely be disposed towards that step if Italy's relations



with Rumania become affectionate : all hope of recovering Transylvania would disappear. And Austria, if Austria desires to remain a separate entity, can surely not count on a combination of German and Italian influence to that end. These two unhappy States will probably prefer King Log to King Stork.

The larger question is, however, whether the League, reduced to those States which sincerely desire its continuance and its effectiveness, may not suddenly expand. The United States, on a view of its own interest, abstained from joining the League which American ideals contributed so largely to planning. Eighteen years have given the United States food for reflection. Americans have had time to realize the difficulties and responsibilities of neutrality. They had become aware how reluctant their democracy is, on moral grounds, to enter on any course of action which may conceivably lead to war ; and yet the interests of such a democracy have to be defended. Beyond question, Japan has counted on America's separation from Europe, and on the crippling of many European forces, occasioned by the weakness of Europe's central organism. The only possible way to secure American interests, and at the same time to prevent the consummation of a wrong which America condemns, is by close co-operation of America with Europe—which may involve war. But the co-operation which matters most, that of Great Britain and in a lesser degree of France, cannot be given completely unless the interests of these countries in Europe are guaranteed, so far as American resources can guarantee them. Logically, the simple course would be for the United States to change its mind and join the League ; but that is Utopian ; and the most one can hope for is a limited co-operation.

The probable outcome is that neither Europe nor America will do anything ; that Japan will succeed in imposing terms of surrender ; and that the trade of Europe and of America with China's four hundred millions will be reduced to a small fraction of what it was. Mary Kingsley thought trade as well worth fighting for as the home town, since the home town had to live by trade : she would have thought an attempt by Japan to grab forcibly all trade facilities in China an attack on England's life. But the Japanese have the great advantage of knowing

clearly what they want and setting out to get it. If they succeed at the same time in defying both America and Europe and in conquering China, they will have earned admiration. It is not easy to admire those who by lack of foresight fail to combine the powers necessary to prevent Japan from carrying out her will.

France has only a secondary responsibility in this matter and has not been so rudely challenged. In any case, although the nation would spring together at a word to defend its own territory, the internal situation there gives the Government—whoever may be its head—full occupation. Great changes, probably beneficent, were made suddenly by M. Blum, and the shock has not yet been absorbed. More or less the same phenomena present themselves in the United States. But there Mr. Roosevelt's difficulty is with the colossal trusts. In France it seems that M. Blum neglected to take account of the very numerous small capitalists who employ fewer than a hundred men. Unless the Government can satisfy this class to some moderate degree, it will not have France behind it; for France is emphatically the country of the small employer—who often began as an artisan. Unfortunately such an employer is apt to think that what was good enough for him in early days should be good enough for today. *Eo immitior quia toleraverat*. M. Chautemp's successors have their work cut out to make all these opposing types hear reason.

In Ireland the passing of the new Constitution, and the acquiescence of Great Britain and the other Dominions in its terms, marks a date. The message sent through a New York newspaper from eighty Senators and two hundred and fifty Republicans in the United States is worth noting :

Salute to  
Eire

"We regard the adoption of the new Irish Constitution, and the emergence of the State of Ireland, as events of the utmost importance, because we see in them the devotion of the Irish people to genuine democratic government, and because they furnish a happy augury for the attainment of lasting peace, understanding and friendship between the Irish and British peoples—a consummation of vital consequence not only to the British and Irish peoples, but to the world at large."

The essential point is that Ireland is now in purely voluntary association with the British Commonwealth. The constitution of the Free State was in part imposed by the Treaty of 1921 and

imposed under threat of war as the alternative. Since then, the evolution of the Commonwealth, through Dominion Conferences in which Irish representatives (more specially Kevin O'Higgins) played a leading part, has made it plain that any Dominion which might choose to secede was free to do so. The only ties binding were ties of self-interest and ties of affection. In the case of Ireland and of South Africa, these latter ties have still to grow, so far as a large part of the people are concerned. Ireland has now claimed the right to make a constitution entirely of her own devising, and the claim has not been resisted. There is, however, only one change of importance. The official head of the Irish Free State, whose formal assent was necessary to law-making, was a representative of the King of England. He was, in each succeeding case, an Irishman chosen on the advice of Irish ministers, and was bound to act on their advice. Mr. Cosgrave's Government accepted this arrangement willingly, and Mr. Healy and Mr. MacNeill represented King George V. in a way that pleased most of Ireland—and not Ireland only. Mr. de Valera, however, and those who agreed with him (about half the electorate) resented the implications of sovereignty. Henceforth the official head of Ireland, in the twenty-six counties, will be a President chosen by the entire electorate. On the suggestion of Cardinal MacRory, Primate of the Catholic Church in Ireland, steps are being taken to secure that, as the result of agreement, only one name shall be put before the electors. If this comes to pass, a good day's work will have been done for Ireland; and I hope and expect that the wishes of the Protestant minority will have been taken into consideration.

In all external relations the Irish State will act, as the Dominions do, through the King and in the King's name. Ministers and consuls abroad will be so accredited. No doubt technical difficulties will arise, but if there is good will, the arrangement can be made to work. And it has been made plain at Geneva again and again that not only the representatives of the Cosgrave government but Mr. de Valera himself are in broad general agreement with British policy on world affairs. What Mr. de Valera has said at Geneva has been welcomed frankly more than once by the British people. To come to the



heart of the matter, it is certain that Mr. de Valera and his Government desire today to see the closest co-operation between Great Britain and the United States in the Far East. Since the Treaty, the anti-English effect of Irish feeling in the United States has lessened steadily. It has not disappeared; there will be a residue of it still, just as there is in Ireland an extreme faction denouncing Mr. de Valera and his "bogus Constitution." But it will be only a remnant, notably reduced from the passing of that Constitution henceforward.

In the more immediate relations of the two countries there cannot be even the beginnings of cordiality till the "economic war" is ended. Nor will Ireland ever be a contented country while the partition lasts a state of affairs, for which Nationalist Ireland chooses to regard England as entirely responsible. But even which partition has to be accepted, things could be made much better than they are to-day. Serious consideration should be given at once to the military aspect, connected with the naval stations in Donegal and Cork. As to the "economic war," it would pay both England and Ireland to submit the whole complicated dispute for arbitration to a tribunal of Americans, before which each side could make its case. Negotiations have begun—significantly on Mr. de Valera's invitation. Men of good will echo Mr. Cosgrave in wishing them "all the good luck in the world."

Students of pre-war diplomacy will find entertainment in the "Political Correspondence" of Alexander Isvolsky, of which the first volume, covering the years 1906 and 1907, has been published by his daughter in Paris. Born in **Isvolsky and** 1856, trained for diplomacy under Prince **Pye-War** 1856, trained for diplomacy under Prince **Diplomacy** Gortschakoff, Isvolsky was fifty years old when the Russian Government made him Minister for Foreign Affairs. His career had begun in the Balkans and then passed on to a stage at Washington which contributed to make him what he became—a Westerner in Russian politics. By 1906, that disposition was confirmed because the disastrous war with Japan had seemed to shut the door against eastward expansion; still more because demand for great constitutional changes had become overwhelming in Russia. He became Foreign Minister

when the Russian Government was endeavouring, under Stolypine, to adapt itself to the existence of a Duma.

In Europe Russia's prestige was formidably weakened. Nothing remained solid but the alliance with France; and since France was moving closer to England, it seemed necessary to seek a better understanding with London, and put an end to the recurring clashes with British aims in Persia, Tibet and Afghanistan. The end was that Triple Entente which realized itself in action when August, 1914, was reached. Readers will find here much light upon the parts played by individual personalities—notably by Edward VII. and his nephew the Kaiser Wilhelm.

The scene opens in Berlin, portrayed in letters from the Russian Ambassador, Count Osten-Sacken, who describes a changed situation. Where the Kaiser had always shown himself temperamentally disposed to favour Russia as against England, there was now marked unfriendliness. Russia had supported England and France against Germany on the question of Morocco at the Conference of Algeiras, and the resulting bitterness was such that nothing could be hoped even from an invitation to join the Tsar's great shooting party at Spala—"which formerly would have worked marvels." At the same time, an improvement in the relations between Berlin and London was noted, resulting from an interview between the Kaiser and King Edward at Friedrichshof; not only this, but the English king was said to be hurt because a personal letter from him to the Tsar had been left without an answer. This letter had conveyed suggestions as to the way in which a sovereign should handle a parliament. "King Edward," the ambassador remarks, "appears to be afflicted, like the Kaiser Wilhelm, with the unfortunate craze for giving advice when it is not asked for." Elephant-keepers must exchange similar confidences about the tempers of their charges! In 1907 there is another example. A meeting with Tsar and Kaiser was projected, and Prince von Bülow had impressed upon Osten-Sacken his own desire to be present on the occasion—enlarging "verbosely" on his devotion to the Russian Sovereign. Osten-Sacken points out that if this arrangement were made, Isvolsky's

attendance, as the opposite number to von Bülow, would become indispensable.

"In that case our August Master could unload on you the laborious part of the political conversations. Kaiser Wilhelm, who is a creature of impulsive fits and starts, with high-flying speculations, often allows himself to be drawn beyond regions of the possible; the limits of reality escape Him, and conversation with Him is promptly affected. You could spare our beloved Sovereign this fatigue."

Most interesting of all in the volume are the letters from Count Benckendorff at London, for whom the King was not sparing of favours—giving him a standing invitation to his box at Covent Garden when no other foreigner had the same privilege. There are nearly a hundred and fifty pages from this shrewd observer. I quote merely this estimate of Edward VII. :

"He has understood his period. And in the main lines of policy even the highest English statesmen follow the King, and concede to him the authority which he possesses, because they have perceived that the King knows the Continent and its complexities infinitely better than any one of them."

The Burlington House Winter Exhibition this year illustrates not a nation, but a century—the century of Rubens, of Velasquez, of El Greco, of Vandyck, of Rembrandt and of so many great

**XVIIth  
Century  
Art**

Dutchmen. The Low Counties have it, for quantity; and for quality, there is Rembrandt's portrait of his mother which nothing could surpass.

On the whole, it presents itself to one chiefly as a collection of portraits—some of them disappointing. Waller has left us charming verse, and a certain distinction surrounds his memory: sad that he should have been such a pudgy-faced fellow. But as a rule, the men of that age look well on canvas—much better to our eyes than the women, who are altogether too melting. They had to be, it was the fashion; and so the older ones among them show up best. Among the men, for pure joy give me Rembrandt's Admiral Cornelius Van Tromp which would serve for the ideal picture of Falstaff—in the days when the jolly knight's belly had not got completely the better of him. Here is a chuckling and capable warrior who would never miss the chance to press an advantage home. And was not that gesture of the broom at his masthead greatly in Sir John Falstaff's manner?

Of the landscapes, I was most attracted by Lord Rothschild's



Cuyp—a study probably in the Ardennes, for there are hills in the background. The golden haze over it does not take away anything from the breathing life of the scene, which centres round two horsemen, one whose horse has just been watered, while the other is still drinking.

Two pictures, once attributed to Velasquez, but now assigned to Rizzi, showed a great painter of whom I had never heard. But the revelation of the exhibition was El Greco. Work of his on that scale does not, I think, exist in any public gallery within these islands. Unfortunately that immensely tall panel of the Nativity needs to be seen at a long distance, which is impossible in such crowded rooms. But one can see over people's heads what carrying quality there is in that peculiar colour—as of a high-pitched but melodious voice—and how the rhythms of the whole composition fall into a kind of solemn dance. To see it is a rare extension of experience.

# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## ART AND ANECDOTE

BY R. H. WILENSKI

**FRENCH PAINTING AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**, by James Laver. With notes on the artists and the pictures by Michael Sevier, and a postscript by Alfred Flechtheim *Batsford. 21s.*

**NARRATIVE PICTURES.** A survey of English Genre and its painters, by Sacheverell Sitwell. With notes on the illustrations by Michael Sevier. *Batsford. 21s.*

When I was an art student some thirty years ago (1906—1908) the English *dilettanti* were agreed that a picture which did nothing but tell a story or describe a scene was popular pictorial literature—a mongrel art to be disqualified from every ring. For when Whistler mated Manet's *Le buveur d'absinthe* (1859) to Japanese prints he was producing in England an art as æsthetic in character as the art then produced by Renoir and the French Impressionists of whom Mr. Laver writes. And if we wish to point the difference between such art and popular descriptive record or popular narrative painting we can do so by saying that whereas a writer with a fluent pen, helped by good reproductions, can give an equivalent of, say, J. J. Tissot's *Ball on shipboard* or *Entre les deux mon coeur balance* painted at exactly the same time as Whistler's *Miss Alexander* and Renoir's *Bal au Moulin de la Galette*—(as Mr. Sitwell in fact does in the jolly book before us)—neither Mr. Sitwell nor Mr. Laver nor anyone else can give us Whistler or Renoir again, because the essence of those lyrical paintings—the artists' æsthetic experience—can only be apprehended in personal contact with the

actual works. In 1906 that difference was widely realized; nothing less was then demanded from a picture than the record in representational painting of the artist's æsthetic experience; the Tate Gallery, ashamed of its Tate and Chantrey Victorian mongrels, briefed its new director, Mr. D. S. MacColl to hide as many as might be in the cellars; and everyone praised the almost-Impressionist seascape by Boudin just accepted as a gift by the National Gallery from the newly established National Art Collections Fund.

Ten years later in 1916, Matisse and the Fauve followers of Van Gogh had pushed the English *dilettanti* still further from the standards of the popular descriptive or anecdotic picture and taught them that in recording his æsthetic experience the artist might distort the representation to increase its rhythmic or romantic expressiveness. And the Tate Gallery then accepted funds to build a wing for the Lane Bequest of French Impressionist pictures and received as a gift from the Contemporary Art Society *The Queen of Sheba* by Duncan Grant.

Ten years later in 1926, it was maintained that the old dictum—"Architecture is the Mother of the Arts"—should be interpreted to mean that Painting, like his mother Architecture, might be essentially an affair of proportions, balance, recessions and so on and that a painting need not be representational if it recorded what I then christened the painter's "architectural experience." That happened because by 1926 Picasso, Braque and Gris had won the Cubist

battle and Ozenfant had converted Cubism to Purism (which Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) had converted to Functional Architecture) and because chromium-steel chairs had appeared at the Paris *Exposition des Arts Decoratifs* and china, glass, tennis balls and so on were displayed in straight lines, triangles and circles in the window of the *Printemps* store. At the same time I pointed out that descriptive or narrative painting need not of necessity be popular in kind if the mind and eye of the artist were original, i.e., if they could reach beyond familiar experience of everyday life. And at that time the Tate Gallery accepted as gifts an almost non-representational painting by Braque, two pictures by Paul Nash, and Stanley Spencer's *Resurrection*.

But meanwhile æsthetic expressionist and architectural painting had been dealt some savage blows. In 1916 the Zurich Dadaists had cried out cynically that the whole of this art, in a world where aggression with bombs, gas and machine guns could only be countered by more bombs, more gas and more machine guns, was a butterfly quite useless to contemporary wheels. In 1920 Picabia, then a Dadaist, had exhibited in this spirit a toy monkey and titled it "Portrait of Cezanne;" and in that year also Lenin (followed later in this by Stalin) put his taboo on æsthetic, expressionist and architectural painting as shameful bourgeois trifling not comprehensible to the masses and ordered "discouragement" of the artists practising it and the encouragement of those willing to paint popular descriptive or narrative pictures which would be within the familiar experience of the masses and lead them by the subjects or easy symbolism to proper appreciation of the Soviet régime. In 1924 André Breton founded Neo-Surrealism (which must not be confused with the real æsthetic Surrealism of Chirico and Chagall) and in 1925 he printed on the cover of a Neo-Surrealist review a large scarecrow labelled *French art at the beginning of the twentieth century* to mark his group's adherence to the Dada attitude in this

matter. And since 1926 the wheels have still further crushed the butterfly. For in 1929 the Neo-Surrealists put out a monstrous pictorial mongrel of their own in the German Max Ernst's *La femme: 100 têtes* (a scrapbook of fragments from cheap nineteenth-century popular prints arranged in gruesome anecdotic combinations) and in paintings by the Spaniard Salvador Dali, depicting nightmare anecdotes with Daguerreotypic illusionism oleographically coloured. Nor is that all. For in 1933 Hitler put his taboo on æsthetic, expressionist and architectural painting as a shameful Bolshevik menace unfit for Aryan consumption and ordered the "discouragement" of the artists practising it and the encouragement of artists willing to paint popular descriptive or narrative pictures which would be within the familiar experience of the masses and lead them by the subjects or easy symbolism to proper appreciation of the National Socialist régime. And now comes Mr. Sitwell as champion of "narrative painting" which he defines as follows: "Perhaps the most easy explanation would be to term it the painting of anecdote. It is the chosen moment in some related incident, and looking more closely in its details we must see hints or suggestions of the before and after of the story." And the Tate Gallery's latest acquisition is the Frenchman J. J. Tissot's *Ball on Shipboard* (1876) bought in 1937 with dear old Chantrey's money.

Does this mean that we are back at the point where we stood when Frith of *Derby Day* gave evidence against Whistler in *Whistler v. Ruskin* (1878)? And that Mr. Sitwell's Tissot, to whom in his day the French *dilettante* preferred Mr. Laver's Impressionists, is now to be our torch and guide? If so we have got there without a "March on London," or "discouragement" of original artists, or compulsory shoutings of "Vive Stalin" or "Heil Hitler"; and thus all is still well with the British Lion which believes good-naturedly that every dog—even a popular narrative mongrel—should have an occasional day.



## PRIVATE LIVES

By W. HORSEFALL CARTER

**THIS IS MY LIFE**, by Vernon Bartlett.  
*Chatto & Windus*. 12s. 6d.

**GEORGIAN ADVENTURE**: The  
Autobiography of Douglas Jerrold.  
*Collins*. 15s.

**A PLAIN TALE FROM THE BOGS**, by  
Rearden Conner. *John Miles*. 8s. 6d.

I do not imagine Vernon Bartlett has ever had Montaigne's Essays as a bedside book. When one stops to reflect upon his frank, uncompromising self-portrayal (and self-betrayal), however, it is of that charming, *simpatico* egoist, Michel de Montaigne, that one inevitably thinks. On the very first page of *This is My Life* there is a phrase which exactly hits off Vernon Bartlett's peculiar quality:—"There is in me . . . a considerable leavening of anxious conceit." The adjective here is all-important, for of the conceit which annoys and repels Bartlett has not a trace; and thus the familiar guise of mock modesty by which the public knows him is no assumed virtue put, as his friends can testify, the quintessential man himself.

The man's sincerity and his humanness (there is no other word) are unique: hence his success at the microphone. After leaving school at sixteen and going abroad to learn languages he is provided by his father with a job in a city firm to look after foreign correspondence. He goes there one morning, is thoroughly snubbed and is miserable, so goes no more but, instead—by lying about his age—secures a job at a language school in Berlin. There his experience is anything but happy, and that, too, comes to an end when a very large blonde woman is found sitting on his knee—"How she got there I don't know, but I can hardly believe that I took the initiative"! Through his war experiences and his early years of journalism runs the same refrain of human weakness and triumphant

humility. Fortune evidently favours the humble no less than the brave, because, for all his self-deprecation, Bartlett has had a thoroughly enviable career; beginning as a reporter on the *Daily Mail*, then experience with Reuters and the *Daily Herald* at the Peace Conference and a three years' period with *The Times* followed by the directorship of the London Office of the League of Nations Secretariat and so on to his days of broadcasting fame—characteristically he has "no recollection whatsoever how I first came to the microphone . . ."—and his present position as Diplomatic and rover correspondent of the *News-Chronicle*. Typical of the man is his summing-up: "It is in fact a lasting puzzle to me that any newspaper gives me regular employment, for I am completely uninterested in obtaining news." What is the secret?

That he is the best of good companions, as I can testify, hardly seems sufficient explanation. Nor is it enough to say that, without depth or brilliance, he has that element of genius which consists in an infinite capacity for taking pains—his famous quarter-of-an-hour broadcasts, as he reminds us, were the product of over twenty hours' reading and preparation. I can only think that Providence, like the public, finds an irresistible appeal in the "little man" ever striving *anxiously* though continually tripping up over the flies and props of the human comedy stage. Things happen to Vernon Bartlett—as they happen to Charlie Chaplin—though he calls on no adventitious aids. There was, for instance, the large horse that ran away with him, when he was carrying precious liquor for the mess, and charged into a troop of cavalry . . .; then during the Peace Conference a Press photographer took his photograph as he was standing outside the fenced-in

portion of the Versailles park where the German delegation was confined and published it in a London paper with the caption—"Hun delegate tries prison bars;" at the first lecture he gives in America he is dressed up in a cassock and surplice and bidden to mount the pulpit whereupon he, inevitably, trips up in his unaccustomed garb and lands in the pulpit on his stomach; and finally when he goes to Spain for a few days to have a peep at the civil war he comes in for a nasty Italo-German air raid at Toledo . . .

Withal a pleasant, readable book which is a faithful enough reflection of "some of the photographic records made in my two-score and three years."

Mr. Douglas Jerrold is just about the same age; and he, too, in his own utterly wrong-headed way, is, I imagine, an endearing personality. But his way has lain in very different reaches of life, on the fringe of England's governing clique, to which, for reasons of temperament, he can never, like Vernon Bartlett, really belong. Whereas Bartlett's tense is essentially the present indicative, with occasional timid peering into the future, Jerrold looks longingly back to the stability of the Victorian age, to the associations, literary and political, of his distinguished forbears, and, with a characteristic distaste for undressing in public, he informs us severely in the Preface that his book is "a record of days lived, not of things heard, of the march of events and the movement of ideas rather than of my own reactions to either . . ."

Westminster, New College, Gallipoli (the author was in the Royal Naval Division and later wrote its history), the Ministry of Food and the Treasury, then publisher with Benns and now Eyre & Spottiswoode, together with the editorship of *The English Review*—from such a background there is ample material for an interesting story. Mr. Jerrold writes well but all through there is a suggestion of frustration. Because of a Catholic upbringing and a mind which, though uncommonly acute, somehow has never quite grown up, he

seems destined to remain "on the fringe." Many personalities who are names to conjure with flit through his pages, but it is not until "The Last Crusade", one feels, that Mr. Jerrold has had a hand in the making of contemporary history. This is when a Spanish friend calmly requires from him one day "a man and three platinum blondes to fly to Africa to-morrow"—whom he duly supplies—to convey General Franco from the Canary Isles to Morocco. Mr. Jerrold's own ideas about Spain are pitiful: he is one of those Liberals gone wrong who, *quâ* Christians, suffer from a chronic Communist nightmare: when a man of his standing—after a visit to Spain in 1937—can dismiss Spain's foreign invaders as "a few Germans in the technical services of the Franco forces and also Italian volunteers," one cannot have a very high opinion of his judgment or accuracy on other matters.

Both these books provide a pleasant respite from the contemporary turmoil and the wrath to come. Mr. Rearden Conner, on the other hand, is a grim figure and has a grim story to tell. The son of an Irishman in British service he suffers moral and physical torment at his various schools, his home life with a dour humourless father and a matronly housekeeper is a fitting prelude to misery, enlivened only by the background of "the troubles." Mr. Conner writes well about Ireland, partly because of his detached position. The author then makes tracks for London (somehow I don't like the phrase with which Chapter XIV. begins: "One day I decide to sling my hook and leave the city of Dublin . . .") and has his fill of wretched experiences as a down-and-out before making some sort of a living as a landscape gardener. That he should maintain his courage and determination to be a writer is very much to his credit. With his novel "Shake Hand with the Devil" he makes a hit. And then we have a close-up of his third world the literary racket. There we leave him, finding it "tame" but still standing "in my coracle on the Sea of Hope."



**COTSWOLD COUNTRY**, by H. J. Massingham. *Batsford*. 7s. 6d.

**DOWN THE RIVER**, by H. E. Bates. With Engravings by Agnes Miller Parker. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.

**COUNTRY MATTERS**, written and Engraved by Clare Leighton. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.

Properly to appreciate the reason for the variousness of the English landscape one must first study a geological map of the country. Architecture, flowers, crops, customs—all are governed by the geological structure out of which they grow. And of all the geological belts that cross this island, the great oolitic belt that runs from the Dorset coast up into Lincolnshire is in many ways the richest. Of course the most favoured area within this belt is the Cotswolds; but there are districts in Somerset and in Rutlandshire hardly inferior—at least as far as architecture goes; and it was a happy thought of Mr. Massingham's to make the whole of this limestone belt the theme for his latest contribution to Messrs. Batsford's admirable series, "The Face of Britain." Certainly nobody was better qualified for the task. "Wold Without End" was proof enough that he knew his Cotswolds well and loved them this side of idolatry; whilst several other books of his have shown his genius for considering landscape in conjunction with the strata that govern it. In "Cotswold Country" these two assets have stood him in such good stead that we need not hope for a better book on limestone England south of the Peak.

Mr. Massingham is not one to toe the line with all those mass-produced praisers of England's beauty-spots: his account of the Cotswolds, therefore, is the better for being discriminately his own. He will have nothing to do with Broadway; Painswick has a "cancer of decay"; Cirencester's decorated church porch is "positively ugly"; and Bourton becomes "the Wigan of the Cotswolds." The result of such individual appreciation, and courage in the expression of it, is a book

unusually actual in its effect upon the reader and full of amply circumstantiated finds. If I may mention a personal disappointment, it is that Mr. Massingham did not give more space to what he calls "the adventure of the Edge" and particularly to all that incomparable part of it that stretches hinterland from Haresfield Beacon. Then, too, he says that he could not find any example of those hay-rick and straw-stack ornaments "by which the countryman expressed the benediction of his labour"—a lack that seems to me strange when I remember how, on a single walk in Rutlandshire last year, I came upon an assortment that ranged from the traditional, triumphant cockerel to aeroplanes (as their maker informed me) "in the h'act of falling." But these are very minor quibbles. "Cotswold Country" is an altogether praiseworthy book, and nobody who knows, or wants to know, that delectable stretch of England should miss it.

Although Mr. Bates's territory overlaps with Mr. Massingham's, his book is so different as to make comparison ridiculous. "I count it one of the luckiest things in life (he begins his story) to have been born within reach of a river valley"; and *Down the River* is an account of some of the priceless treasures this good luck has brought him. With all the charm and verisimilitude of a born country writer he tells us of the things he did and saw and dreamed as a boy on the banks of the Nene and the Ouse. The colour and smell and life of these two so different rivers is still in his blood; and whether it was the Nene, sacred to those Sunday walks with his grandfather, slow and all-seeing and ending at the riverside pub, or the Ouse, sacred to Summer, that made most impression upon him I do not know; though I think his most vivid recollections are of the former. Perhaps that is partly because in Winter the Nene flooded, and any morning the boy might wake up to an icy world of infinite possibilities. But against this attraction of the Nene must be set the attraction of the lace-makers who lived beside the Ouse (and about whose



ding art Mr. Bates has some vivid facts to reveal) and of the water-mill and the otters.

It is when Mr. Bates comes to the subject of these otters that he suddenly changes the whole tone of his easy-going narrative and informs it with all the fury and scorn of which he is capable. I know that some will object to this vehement chapter; but it seems to me that Mr. Bates's arguments are as irrefutable as his passion is undeniable, and since the otter is part of the river-life and since it is being ruthlessly hunted by people whose delight it is to cap their day's sport with a tearing out of bowels, I for one do not see why the chapter should not be included.

After Mr. Bates's exact information and alert narrative, Miss Leighton's essays on such "country matters" as blacksmiths and primroses, harvest festivals and cricket matches, chair-bodgers and bell-ringers, seems almost too gentle and just a little on the sentimental side. There is a hint of the larger-than-life in her characters and a slightly jarring ring about some of the little incidents whereby she enlivens her otherwise static descriptions.

Nevertheless, *Country Matters* is a book of note, though mainly for the sake of its engravings. To my lay eye it seems that Miss Leighton's skill as an engraver increases every year, and at times, as in the storm scene at the fair and in the figures on pages 57, 44 and (particularly) 38, achieves unmistakable genius. Moreover, her illustrations really are part and parcel of the book, whereas I found Miss Parker's engravings, lovely as they are and ingeniously compounded of design and pure naturalism, almost an intrusion on Mr. Bates's narrative.

In conclusion, a word of praise is owing to the publishers of these three books, each one of which is a handsome tribute to the art of book production in this country. The numerous photographs in Mr. Massingham's book more than live up to the Batsford tradition.

C. HENRY WARREN.

ENDS AND MEANS, by Aldous Huxley.

*Chatto and Windus.* 8s. 6d. net.

*Ends and Means*, both for its good qualities and its bad, is a landmark in the spiritual history of this generation. Its subject is the essential nature of the good life and the Great Society; the evils and weaknesses—and their causes—whose horrible practice threatens mankind today with indescribable ruin; and the methods which we must learn to understand and use if we are to escape destruction and enter, as a race, the Kingdom of Life. No greater theme can be treated by mortal pen; and Mr. Huxley, as might be expected, handles it with immense learning, acumen, and insight, with sweep and imagination and power.

Mr. Huxley sees the good life as the life of the free spirit, liberated from the separating thralldom of individual desire, ruled by sensitive intelligence, compassion and love. He envisages the Great Society as a social organization which helps men to live the good life, a society obviously free from the idolatry, greed, violence and ambition which poison social existence to-day. Both his analysis and his ideals he bases on the underlying physical unity of the universe as demonstrated by modern science and its underlying spiritual unity, as directly known in the experience of mystics and men of supreme virtue throughout the ages.

Among the countless responsibilities of spiritual leaders, the first and greatest is conviction. Only those can wear the mantle of Elijah who have themselves passed through the fires of experience and emerged with faith. Ordinarily one would not think of asking whether a man can stand up and say with his whole heart, *Credo in Unum Deum*; but to Mr. Huxley that question must be put. The answer is in the affirmative. This book shows that Mr. Huxley has passed through that valley of the shadow which is strewn with souls unable to yield up the egotist's final treasure, that abandonment of rational proof for direct intuitive belief which is the supreme intellectual self-surrender.

But though the faith in whose light *Ends and Means* has been written illumines many dark places in contemporary life, there are two which, despite all his efforts, Mr. Huxley in my opinion, still leaves in their original blackness. These are war and the problem of evil. War, it is true, he discusses at length; but to evil he gives scarcely any attention. A definition or two, the apparent assumption that, with what is good once recognized and defined, all men will successfully seek it, some comments on the inherent instability of evil—and that is all. One might almost think that to avoid evil was as easy as for a diner-out to order a mixed grill.

Both war and evil are obviously connected. In many senses, war, certainly under modern conditions, is the supreme manifestation of evil. But it is not always evil unredeemed. No reader who accepts Mr. Huxley's chapter on war can possibly understand the passionate belief in their own righteousness with which certainly one side, perhaps both sides, have recently fought on the bleak snow-driven uplands of Teruel. But for Mr. Huxley no warrior can be a hero. Indeed, his preoccupation with the problem of war amounts almost to obsession, an obsession which makes him drag it like a smoking victim across pages of argument to which it scarcely relates.

*Video meliora proboque ;  
Deteriora sequor.*

This favourite quotation of Mr. Huxley's applies to his own treatment of war and to many evasions of lesser problems (planning is one example) which, scarcely noticed at first reading,—so great is his skill as a writer—nevertheless on closer inspection mar the pages of his book. To whom much is given, from him much shall be required. Mr. Huxley must face again and with a freer spirit the great problems of war and evil, face them not as a spectre to be banished from sight at all costs or a pitfall which need only be pointed out to be avoided but with the passionate honesty and humility with which alone they can be

understood, and, when understood, perhaps overcome — though not necessarily before we have again made Moloch his awful sacrifice. Another man might evade this task. Having written *Ends and Means*, Mr. Huxley cannot. For him it is a responsibility which he owes to his generation.

JULES MENKEN.

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ON BORROWED TIME, by Lawrence Edward Watkin. *Loval Dickson*. 7s. 6d.

This novel from America is worth special notice, lest it should be overlooked in these days of over-production. It is a myth, narrated with a skill and direct simplicity that remind me of Pushkin's *Ace of Spades*. Yet it is a first novel, written by a young lecturer in Lexington University. He admits that the story "seems to be Flemish; it seems to have been current in the French countryside after the wars of the Fronde, and it seems to have visited Sicily."

The tale is one which students of folklore will recognize. Grim Death, that mischievous spectre, is cornered by a mortal and driven up an apple-tree, where he is powerless. In the end he manages to break the spell, but not before the suspension of his labours has threatened to upset the whole human race.

A nice piece of allegory. The novelist has taken this theme and made a charming symphony out of it. Death, called Mr. Brink, is captured by Gramp, an old man of eighty who wants to live another sixteen years so that he can be sure that his beloved grandson, left in his charge after the parents are killed in a car-crash, may be safely launched in life. The old man and the boy are two happy and innocent conspirators against the sham respectability which Mark Twain so breezily attacked. Mr. Watkin's urchin has a touch of Tom Sawyer about him, and further similarities may be found in Mr. Watkin's tale and those of his great predecessor. Both know how to use whimsicality with success. Both know



how to spice it with a touch of derision and irresponsible fantasy.

At first Gramp is hailed as a public benefactor; but as the imprisonment of Death gives amnesty to maggots as well as men; and since there are undertakers and insurance companies who play a large part in the organization of society, the old man is soon threatened with infamy if he does not recall his spell. But he has elaborate personal reasons—family reasons which are carefully revealed to the reader—for refusing. Nobody knows what will come of this wilful upsetting of the laws of creation. The nation's morals are already being undermined. Why, at the very foot of the apple-tree a young man and a girl . . . ! But Gramp has not reckoned with Mr. Brink's cleverness in appealing to the innocent boy who is the prime cause of all this disturbance. The little fellow is lured to the tree by the invisible voice. He climbs the high railings which Gramp has erected round the tree, and he falls and breaks his back. So he is doomed to something worse than death, unless Gramp is willing to release him, and with him the rest of humanity living and unborn. So the story, with the world which it symbolizes, relapses to the normal, and is nicely rounded off.

With undertones and overtones strikingly direct and simple, the author has added his own personal quality to the tale, creating a group of small-town types who yet have a touch of universality. The result is a remarkable little work of art. RICHARD CHURCH.

**PAINT AND PREJUDICE**, by C. R. W. Nevinson. *Methuen*. 12s. 6d.

**AN IRISHMAN'S ENGLAND**, by J. S. Collis. *Cassell*. 7s. 6d.

An impression that remained with me, after I had finished Richard Nevinson's extremely interesting autobiography, was that he regards himself as a sorely tried, persecuted and lonely figure. Yet nearly all that he tells us about his career suggests the opposite. From his earliest youth he had the *entrée* to circles into which it takes the average young painter years to gain

admission. Apart from bouts of ill-health, of which he gives us detailed descriptions, he seems to have escaped the major miseries which so many men have had to endure in order to preserve their independence.

His schooldays were, it is true, very unhappy. He was sent to Uppingham, where he was "kicked, hounded, caned, flogged, hairbrushed, morning noon and night." But he was not the only future creative artist who found life at a conventional public school a "hell on earth." From Uppingham, as a compensation, he went "straight to Heaven: to St. John's Wood School of Art," to train for the Royal Academy Schools, although he actually went on to the Slade. Here he made friends with Wadsworth, Allinson and Gertler. "I was delighted to be able to help Gertler," he tells us, "I hope without patronage, to the wider culture that had been possible for me through my birth and environment." With Professor Tonks, who advised him "to abandon art as a career," he got on badly, and it is clear that the memory of this discouragement still rankles. Others, however, like Frank Rutter, Gilman, Gore and Sickert, were quick to recognize his talents. After a spell of journalism, during which he had an amusing interview with Marie Lloyd and made the acquaintance of Charlie Chaplin, he went to Paris to continue painting, met Lenin and for some time shared a studio with Modigliani. He bought one of Modigliani's pictures for £5 which he was able to sell years later, when the boom started, for £120. He maintains that since Modigliani's "leap into fame the most utter nonsense has been written about him—how he drove his mistress to her death; how he begged for food; how he died of dissipation and poverty, and how is that possible in Paris?" This naïve question reveals the advantages of having parents rich enough to send you to a public school. Modigliani, he declares, was "kind, constant and considerate; a *bourgeois* Jew."

Like others who reached manhood before the War, Nevinson is dis-



illusioned about the England of to-day which, he says, "seems more vulgar and cheap-minded than it was . . . Maybe publicity has killed something. The venom of current writers and the personal vindictiveness now displayed were then unknown." Although he had already begun to make a name for himself, prior to 1914, and was, as he tells us, "lunching and dining with all the rich and great of the land," it was his admirable series of war pictures which established his position. There were, of course, some who did not like them and wrote them down, and he seems to have been badly treated by the Tate Gallery. But on the whole, the praise he received so far outweighed the adverse criticism that it is difficult to understand why he took the latter so bitterly to heart.

Mr. Collis, as his volume of essays "Farewell to Argument" demonstrated, is a literary critic of great discernment who can write brilliantly on his own subjects. His world is evidently the world of religious and philosophical ideas and the literature in which they find expression; he knows less, and is less perceptive about ordinary human beings and their racial characteristics. Like so many "Celtic fringers" educated at English public schools—he was at Rugby under Dr. David—he idealizes the type of Englishman he was expected to imitate, "the English gentleman." Whereas the English hold the view that "there are gentlemen of every class, including even the aristocracy," Mr. Collis narrows the field to those whose parents could afford to give them the caste training which is peculiar to this country. He does not realize the "old school tie" no longer has either the social or the ethical value which it once possessed. Mr. Collis, who evidently does not study the crime reports in his daily newspaper, believes that, among Englishmen, the public schoolboy has the monopoly of honesty. "If you deal with a man who is not a gentleman in England," he surprisingly writes, "you have to take every precaution, to be suspicious, to safeguard yourself against being done in the eye. And

you are right in doing so, if you are dealing on any sort of commercial footing: for if he is not a gentleman he will, to-day, nine times out of ten, be a liar, a charlatan, a backbiter, and a thief under a respectable covering. . . . "The Bible," he adds, "means nothing to the man who isn't a gentleman and little to the man who is. But the latter has his own working Bible, his traditions. And he sticks to them."

To comment on such statements would be a waste of good ink. To the English working man, whom the author regards as in every way inferior to his Irish brother, he devotes page after page of vituperation. "Outside his own family," Mr. Collis assures us, "he recognizes no such words as loyalty, gratitude or affection." If for the word "family" we substitute "class," is not this equally true of the upper classes, who have coined the word "outsider" and regard it as the most contemptuous expression in their vocabulary? Warming to his work, Mr. Collis observes that the English proletarian's "emotional reactions to politeness, decency, thoughtfulness, fair dealing and generosity differ radically from those of the gentleman. . . . He is irreligious to the core."

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

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**OXFORD LIMITED**, by Keith Briant.

*Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

**THE CAMFORD VISITATION**, by H. G. Wells. *Methuen.* 2s.

In these days unless Cambridge can stage a murder or lose a boat race she is left severely alone, whereas an Oxford undergraduate has only to be hauled before the magistrates for exceeding the speed limit, and the newsboards blaze with the gratifying intelligence "Varsity Student's Dangerous Prank."

It was a relief to find in Mr. Briant's sober "Introduction" to *Oxford Limited*:

"It is doubtful whether Oxford has suffered more from the abuse of her detractors than from the praise of her friends. . . . Thus, the admirers of Oxford would have us see life in the University in the same light that the author of 'The Fifth Form of St. Dominic's' saw life in a public school, while her cruder detractors insist that Oxford is the home of Bacchanalian rites, the source of poisonous propaganda and the foster-mother of extravagance."

*Oxford Limited* is, in fact, the best and most informative book that has been written about the university as it is to-day. In addition to information about contemporary life, which Mr. Briant is especially well qualified to give, there is a brief "Historical Excursion" into the past, and some useful speculation about the future. The fact that the "value" of three years at Oxford has appreciably decreased is, in Mr. Briant's view, a criticism of the age rather than of Oxford, and he considers that if its continued insistence on the importance of intellectual and humane values means its end, such a collapse will herald the collapse of the present world civilization.

This is finely said, and the comforting thing about it is that the speaker has himself only just come down from the university. It must not be thought that Mr. Briant is content to sing the praises of his Alma Mater in a tedious strain of slow music. He comments severely on the extreme conservatism of Congregation. He records the comparative failure (at the moment) of the Oxford Appeal. He calls attention to the need for a representative student council to act as a link between the two

halves of the university. Although *Oxford Limited* is a refreshing book to come from a member of the younger generation.

Mr. H. G. Wells, like his elder, Mr. Bernard Shaw, becomes markedly less interested in plot, characterization, and literary grace as he grows older. *The Camford Visitation* concerns a mysterious Voice which booms out, now loud and clear, now still and small, to all sorts of important and unimportant graduates, but it seems strangely indifferent to the junior members of the university. It made a Positively Final Appearance on Congregation Day, and its last words were:

"There is no salvation for races that will not save themselves. Half the stars in the sky are the burning rubbish of worlds that might have been."

With this typical Wellsian utterance the Voice ended its message, and Camford returned to a peaceful routine that would obtain Mr. Briant's commendation. I enjoyed this short story. It is Wells at the top of his present form.

ERIC GILLET

**NEW WRITING (4)**, edited by John Lehmann. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 6s.

**A BOY IN KENT**, by C. Henry Warren. *Geoffrey Bles.* 7s. 6d.

**THE HORSEMAN'S WEEK-END BOOK** by Gordon Winter. *Seeley Service.* 8s. 6d.

**BOOK ILLUSTRATION**, by R. P. Gossop. *Dent.* 1s. 6d.

Do not imagine that I find the new writing dull. On the contrary much of it, as far as the writing goes, is very good and no one anticipates with greater pleasure the arrival of a fresh volume of Mr. Lehmann's twice yearly publications. But, and it is a big but as far as I am concerned, there is a tendency in much of the work, which is sometimes called left-wing and sometimes "new," to imagine that the view which the authors see from their own particular window is much wider and exciting than it really is. Indeed I believe that many of them have no windows, only a slit set low down in the castle wall and through which they descried a poor prospect—a narrow



vista set between high walls. At the far end of this corridor there may be a floor, a door which is sometimes but too rarely opened. With great energy and fine ability they describe everything to be seen within, but having fitted their spectacles, look through their slit, and cut off their vision by the walls they cannot see without.

C. Henry Warren must forgive me if I tell him that for me *A Boy in Kent* starts by being wholly charming and ends by becoming over sweet. It is an opinion which matters little, for very many readers will find his tale delightful from beginning to end. The narrative, nevertheless, lacks form. The boy's character—a shy, sensitive type—set in a background of nature far from red in tooth and claw, is well drawn; but starting well the tale becomes entirely episodic and the boy's mind more difficult to follow owing to the impossibility of fixing his age for two pages together. I enjoyed reading this book and admire Mr. Warren's descriptive writing, otherwise I would not bother to criticize it in so short a space; he might have written a vignette of rare quality but somehow he has just failed. Probably, though short, it is still over long, and possibly I am worried by the necessity of associating descriptive passages of this kind—"There were several streams in the copse, varying from elusive threads of water to a wide flow that had to be crossed on stepping-stones"—with the voice of a child. Compare Lorna Doone. "Annie should not come with me, because the water was too cold; for the winter had been long, and snow lay here and there, in patches in the hollow of the banks, like a lady's gloves forgotten." And then follow Jan Ridd through the stream as he tries to catch a loach with his three-pronged fork.

One thing is certain: Gordon Winter knows more than two things about horse, although, if he knows the coarse one, he has left it out of his *Horseman's Week-End Book*. Week-end books for the specialized as well as the general reader have been justifiably popular in recent years, and this one, in the

publishers' series for the sportsman, will be at most bed-sides where sleeps a lover of the horse. In it the reader will be able to refresh his knowledge under the guidance of the author and R. Ansell Wells, test his memory by trying to answer the questions without looking at page 273, and incidentally, if he is that way inclined, set a few posers for his friends on the morrow. Best of all, he may re-read a favourite passage from the many extracts in prose and verse of the horse in literature, and with this night-cap in his head, whatever may be in his stomach, fall to sleep without fear of night starvation. A word also for Anne Bullen's delightful decorations.

I must confess, sadly, of my failure to consider the decline of book illustration until reading Mr. R. P. Gossop's little book, being the seventh Dent Memorial Lecture. Whether there will be a revival of the art seems doubtful. Few people care for illustration in works of fiction, but a book like the one reviewed immediately above, would not have the same value without its decorations. But the present moment—a time of high and increasing costs—would appear an evil one for suggesting a renaissance. JOHN ARMITAGE.

THE BENDING SICKLE, by Gerald Bullett. *Dent*. 7s. 6d.

ENCHANTER'S NIGHTSHADE, by Ann Bridge. *Chatto & Windus*. 7s. 6d.

THE HOUSE BY THE TREE, by Norah C. James. *Cassell*. 7s. 6d.

POISON FLOWER, by Mabel Constanduros. *The Bodley Head*. 7s. 6d.

"The High Street was as lively as ever on this mellow September morning." Mr. Bullett's pastoral style is as smocky as ever, with a village called Sunday Severals and a walking-on part for Mercy Bedstraw, the local idiot. To reach his perfectly appointed countryside he sends a publisher down for the week-end, on a visit to an old lady whose youthful and ninetyish novel it is proposed to resurrect for the amusement of a precious public. Then



we fade back to the childhood of Lalage Green, secretly scribbling her manuscript of *Lord Roger*. Not until the last chapter does the publisher step from the car to meet the serene and charming old authoress, and meanwhile we have pursued Lalage's personal Cavalcade through sixty years or so. There is an early marriage to a brute, and a violent end for him. Then a period of earning in a small French *pension*, a romance, a second marriage, the War, sheep-dipping, children, and the sunset of old age. Passages of light description and an analysis of character that has moments of conviction cannot entirely compensate for the loose form of this novel, its shifts of pace, the mannered rural backcloth and the facetiousness, at one stage, of French idiom literally rendered into English.

The foreign idiom does not trouble Miss Ann Bridge, who turns in her new novel to the Italy of thirty years ago. One is aware of a manner of thought and expression slightly alien in time and space, and a French or an Italian phrase is dropped lightly here and there. It is enough. We are transported, and the careful detail of dress and scene and occupation makes everything recognizable. On her first arrival as governess to Marietta, the youngest child of an aristocratic North Italian family, the English girl Almina Prestwich finds much that is bewildering. The reader shares both her first confusion among the family's collaterals and their habits of mind and action, and also her gradual initiation. The pattern is close, the pace steady, and with great art an attempted suicide is prepared for us by a successful one. It was inevitable that Almina, innocent to a degree incredible were it not carefully supported by circumstance, should fall in love with one or other of the young Counts. And when she has been chosen by the one on whom her middle-aged but still beautiful employer has already fixed her attentions, expectation of the crisis becomes exciting. What is remarkable is that when this critical situation has

developed it can be discussed successfully by half a dozen interested parties without losing its savour. For the interested parties have character sharp and well defined, and their reaction to any situation, as told by Miss Bridge, would be worth observing. As apex to the whole baroque pyramid of the swarming family, the old Marchesa is quietly allowed to acquire supreme importance. One wants nothing so much as to see her reach her hundredth birthday, and in the last chapter she does so. Perhaps she settles everybody's troubled affairs a little too happily in the end. But, as young Marietta observes: "Bonnie Mama always knows what is right, and she causes things to happen, and others cannot."

A successful suicide and an attempted one occur also in *The House by the Tree*. But after the grace and intelligence of *Enchanter's Nightshade* Miss Norah James sorely tries one's patience. The Edwardian innocence of Miss Bridge's governess is far less outrageous than the hysterical helplessness of Francis and Noel, who, the jacket tells us, "are inseparable pals when Pauline is thrust into their lives!" This is an occasion when it is fair to quote a blurb which gives exactly the flavour of the book. When Francis gets drunk, Noel tells Pauline that he is "tiddly-wops." Nor does the suicide of one of these egregious chums, by reason of an attempted *ménage à trois*, afford any relief. Gangrene attacks the relationship thereafter. And it seems, although the last page brings its message of hope that only Thurber or Dorothy Dickson could really have helped the survivors.

Miss Mabel Constanduros, well known as an entertainer, has written what might have been (and may yet be) a first-class Aldwych farce. But the elaborations that have been found necessary in order to fit it between the covers of a novel are not impressive. Nevertheless, there are good laughs in *Poison Flower*, and after *The House by the Tree* they are welcome.

FRANCIS WATSON.

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

for the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY public.

While Japan continues her forays in China, in Europe there is for the time being a deceptive calm. Meanwhile the ill significance of the so-called anti-Comintern pact is being borne in upon us: it is nothing less than an onslaught upon the privileged position of the three major democratic States, Great Britain, France and the U.S.A., by the three nations that are wedded to the ancient remedy of war. "Communism" comes in only as a convenient bogey.

This point cannot be driven home too often. We are grateful therefore to Professor **Guglielmo Ferrero** for providing a conspectus of this grim "rule of war" and showing unmistakably the interaction of events in Manchuria, Abyssinia and Spain. Professor Ferrero has had the advantage of a backside seat, so to speak, for since 1930 he has occupied the chair of Modern History at the University of Geneva. Like many another independent thinker he has been driven out of his own country—and in 1935 all his books written in Italian were seized by the Italian Government. In pre-Fascist Italy he was regarded, with Benedetto Croce, as a historian in the front rank, and his works on *The Greatness and Decline of Rome* and the *Cæsars* enjoy worldwide reputation. In recent years he has concerned himself a good deal with "The Tragedy of Peace" (the title of one of his latest books).

What is frequently not appreciated is that the use by the anti-democratic powers of the Communist bugbear for their own expansionist ends is, in a sense, designed to parry Soviet Russia's holding of the anti-Fascist weapon. The point is clearly brought out in the article on "The Twilight of Comintern" by Professor **E. H. Carr**. Professor Carr is one of the leading authorities in the country on Russia and the historical background of Marxism. His

biography of Karl Marx (1932) is rated very high, and a recent study of **Michael Bakunin** has been described as one of the few political books of the present age which will live. He occupied important positions at the Foreign Office until the summer of 1936 when he resigned to become Wilson Professor of International Politics at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

These articles complete the analysis of the European scene initiated by the articles of Pertinax and Sir Arthur Willert last year, a grim winter's tale with which most students of public affairs are only too painfully familiar. It is time for THE FORTNIGHTLY to turn to constructive remedies, which must originate from a synthesis of British, French and American effort. But an essential preliminary is an improved understanding between the British and French peoples, whose incompatibility of temper is notorious. The article by **M. Pierre Viénot** should contribute substantially to this end. Those who follow European affairs will recognize in M. Viénot the very able Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Léon Blum Government which ruled France for just over a year. M. Viénot is a moderate Socialist who first attracted attention by his acute and sympathetic analysis of Germany in the years immediately preceding the Hitler régime, published under the title *Incertitudes Allemandes*.

As a first timid step towards concerted effort by the democracies there is, indeed, the projected Anglo-American Trade Agreement—a way of peace which Sir Arthur Willert commended to us in his article last September. **Mr. A. A. James** gives us a measured view of this trade aid, as seen from Australia. An ex-editor of agricultural newspapers

in Brisbane and Sydney, and until recently Secretary of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, Mr. James is admirably qualified for his present task — which he interprets as “endeavouring to see Australia from the outside and world problems from the inside.”

Another facet of the dislocation of the traditional international trade system is illuminated by **Joseph Johnston**, Lecturer in Economics at Trinity College, Dublin. Mr. de Valera's undoubted success in building up Irish industries has been achieved, we are told, at the expense of Irish Agriculture. A realization of the hard economic facts expounded by Joseph Johnston, was no doubt, one of the factors that inspired “Dev” to take the initiative for the recent Anglo-Irish conversations.

One of the by-products of the political chemistry of our time is the problem of refugees, now entering upon an acute phase, **Sir John Hope Simpson** who tells the whole story in brief compass, has a distinguished record of public service. An Indian Civil Servant for some twenty-five years he has served since retirement on a number of Government Commissions—for India, Palestine, Newfoundland—and was Director-General of the National Flood Relief Commission, China, 1931-1933. From 1926-1930 he was Vice-President of the Refugees Settlement Commission, at Athens, and was recently appointed Director of the new Refugees Survey, launched under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

The mention of refugees inevitably calls to mind the *refugios* against air raids which one sees everywhere in the chief Spanish cities. We in the countries as yet untouched by war should take action while there is yet time, and the National Government has acquired merit in at last enacting

its Air Raid Precautions Bill. **W. T. Wells** who recounts lucidly the measures in preparation and the reasons for them, has contributed articles from time to time to *The Spectator* and *The Times* and has done useful work as assistant to the Military correspondent of *The Times*.

Parliament, when it resumes, should spare a little time to deal with the vociferous demands from Wales for a greater measure of autonomy and special consideration. **LI. Wyn Griffith** who explains that the distinctive language, which is Welshmen's common heritage, is at the root of the problem of Wales, is Editor of the Journal of The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion.

In lighter vein we have **J. S. Collis** who contributes a sketch of the British Museum Reading Room. His sketch may serve to celebrate the decision of the Trustees to extend the closing-time of that “Work-house” by an hour. **J. S. Collis** author of *An Irishman's England*, reviewed on another page, is a versatile writer who boldly “commenced author,” just after coming down from Oxford in 1922, by an interpretative biography of **Bernard Shaw**.

**H. M. Walbrook** is a veteran student of the theatre who was frequently a contributor to *THE FORTNIGHTLY* under Courtney's editorship. His subject, **Henry Irving**, is of perennial interest.

Finally, there is **Francis Yeats-Brown** with one of his characteristic studies of India—not as a problem but as a reservoir of humanity. **F. Yeats-Brown**, author of *Bengal Lancer* needs no introduction. He is that rare combination, the soldier-mystic, combining pig-sticking with yoga and, latterly, a near-Fascist interest in politics.



## THE FORTNIGHTLY BAZAAR

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Our distinguished contemporary, *The London Mercury*, kindly included us in its list of monthly magazines which cost more than somewhat per issue. It was explaining the necessity of raising its own price from one shilling a month to two shillings, and it took THE FORTNIGHTLY, among others, as an example of the prices that reviews found it necessary to charge. Just at this time, there is less reason than ever for excusing one's price, for quality demands support in hard cash besides flattery. In any case we wish *The London Mercury* the best of good fortune in 1938 and welcome from Lawrence and Wishart a new friend in *The Modern Quarterly*. This is priced at half-a-crown, is published from 2, Parton Street, W.C.1, and has a distinguished editorial council. Its aims are clearly set out at the beginning of the January issue. "We live," says the statement signed by the Council, "in an age of great intellectual activity, of great achievement in the social and natural sciences." . . . "But it is becoming increasingly apparent that in modern society these achievements are not being utilized to the full; we are accustomed to the company of war and poverty, and to the perversion of scientific discovery to ignoble and injurious ends." And the Council go on to say that they believe "that it is urgently necessary to combat such tendencies," and that they wish "to contribute to a system of thought which will correspond to the real world which science analyses and in which we live." Contributors to the first number are, H. Levy, J. D. Bernal, Benjamin Farrington, Joseph Needham, Max Black, F. D. Klingender, and Erich Roll.

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The Geneva Research Center, Villa Rigot, 14, Avenue de France, Geneva, announces a new pamphlet series to be published during 1938. Included among them are *The Crisis in International Organization* by M. Nicolas Politis, *Revision of the Covenant* by Professor Hans Kelsen, *The First Experiment with Sanctions* by Albert E. Highley, *The United States and World Organization in 1937*, *The Sino-Japanese Dispute 1937*, and *The League of Nations and The Problem of Nutrition*. The Geneva Research Center serves as an information bureau and clearing house in connection with national research organizations to which it renders various services; undertakes long-term research studies on vital problems; awards fellowships to scholars from various parts of the world to enable them to benefit from Geneva's unsurpassed documentation; holds occasional conferences; and issues a monthly News Letter. Subscriptions are invited, and should be addressed to the Director.

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Modern publicity takes strange forms. The New Architecture exhibition organized by Mars (Modern Architectural Research) Group was heralded in some "trailer" copy thus: "The amount of plywood used to panel the walls could make a box for the Nelson Column, and a mile and a quarter of wood framework is being used to support it. The ceiling will be covered with a false roof, using a thousand yards of brown and white casement cloth. A couple of hundredweight of nails and a mile and half of electric cable—enough current to light fifty houses—are other figures which give some idea of the scale on which the exhibition is planned."

Not that the "impression by statistics" form of publicity is unusual. In a very well produced brochure advertising Gas at Earl's Court, we are led gently up the gas walk through a flood of statistics. Earl's Court took eighteen months to build and cost £1,500,000; the building covers more than nine acres; seven and a quarter million bricks were used; 80,000 cubic yards of concrete, 24,000 tons of cement—and so on until we come to the really important point, the seven gas-equipped kitchens.

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Not only geographically but also by history and culture the Northern Countries constitute a community of their own among the other European Countries. It is natural, therefore, that the Northern Countries should join in common endeavours for promoting mutual interests and co-operate in the restoration and consolidation of international economic relations. The Delegations for the Promotion of Economic Co-operation between the Northern Countries—an organ created in 1934—have published a book entitled "The Northern Countries in World Economy," which gives a useful account of the basic elements in the economic structure of those Countries, their various trades, their position as producers and consumers, international balance, commercial policy and economic co-operation. It provides a very vivid impression of how Denmark's butter, bacon and eggs, Finland's, Norway's and Sweden's timber, pulp and paper, as well as Sweden iron ore and machinery and Iceland's and Norway's fish rapidly gained markets in various countries of the world.

## THE DUBLIN REVIEW.

**T**HE DUBLIN REVIEW was founded in the year 1836, as a journal of Catholic letters; since then it has continued to appeal to a large reading public. The first number contained articles on such diverse subjects as the Hampden controversy, the Irish railway system and Maria Monk's black nunnery. Since that day there have been many articles by distinguished writers, including Cardinal Wiseman, Cardinal Manning, Dr. Lingard, W. G. Ward, Professor Mivart, to name only a few.

The policy of the Review has always been to aim at the breadth of view and true Catholic humanism which were the special qualities of its founders, Cardinal Wiseman, Daniel O'Connell and Charles Russell. Distinguished contributors during recent years include Christopher Dawson, Shane Leslie, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Archdeacon Goodier, S.J., Algar Thorold, Abbot Butler, O.S.B., Father M. C. D'Arcy, S.J., Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., Professor Edwyn Bevan and Monsignor Ronald Knox.

There have also been articles by figures well-known on the continent, including Cardinal Faulhaber, Don Luigi Sturzo, Dr. Waldemar Gurian, Daniel Rops and Nicholas Berdyaev.

A friend of the Review recently observed to the editors that it could best be enjoyed along with a good glass of port; we hope that some who read this advertisement may try the experiment.

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# THE FORTNIGHTLY

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MARCH, 1938

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## CRISIS

BY THE EDITOR

THE FORTNIGHTLY is an independent review without party ties and dedicated only to the preservation of certain standards in public life. If its articles on foreign affairs have firmly opposed the expansionist aims and "gangster" methods pursued by Germany, Italy and Japan during the past six years of reversion to international anarchy, it has certainly not been from any blind prejudice against the National Socialist idea. And if our contributors have, generally, been critical of the action (or inaction) of His Majesty's Government, the attitude taken up—by Pertinax, Sir Arthur Willert, The Hon. Harold Nicolson, and Professor Guglielmo Ferrero, for example—has been commendably free from the catch-cries of the Left and has manifestly been inspired by considerations of the highest national interest. Nevertheless, with the resignation of Mr. Anthony Eden from the Government, and particularly in view of the circumstances which provoked it, it is impossible for us to remain silent.

What are the facts? For months it has been an open secret that the deplorable weakness of British foreign policy, which is the current coin of discussion outside these islands, was due not to insufficiency of armaments but inadequacy of purpose, a confusion of counsel which has enabled Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini by continual and characteristic pivotings of the Berlin-Rome axis to put the National Government "on the spot"—and thereby establish and confirm in the minds of the peoples of Europe this country's decadence. Time and again it has been shown that the patrician elements of our governing class are simply out of their depth in the surging tide of contemporary problems.

Because of a pathetic and abysmal ignorance of the new forces at work—the emergence of the mass-man of which Señor Ortega y Gasset has so brilliantly written, i.e., the ascendancy of the *petite bourgeoisie* with all the limitations of that class—the



older members of the Cabinet have consistently played mouse to the cat of the predatory Powers. With the support of a section of Conservative opinion, which has yet to learn the European alphabet, and with certain elements in the City ever ready to stage the "ballet of the frozen feet," they have apparently allowed themselves to be bulldozed by the preposterous idea that the sole purpose of the rulers of Germany and Italy (to say nothing of Japan) is to save the world from Bolshevism. This sprat has caught so many mackerels that it is hardly surprising to find it the *pièce de résistance* of the German Chancellor's latest speech. Anyone with half an eye can see, however, that the mischief to which Germany and Italy have put their hands in Spain has precious little to do with any ideology; raw materials, minerals and strategic key-points, these are the objects of their intervention in the Spanish schism. The anti-Comintern pact, too, is manifestly no mere shield and sword for use against Russia but, as we said last month, nothing less than an onslaught upon the privileged position of the three major democratic nations, Great Britain, France and U.S.A.

Mr. Eden, to his undying credit, has, with staunch support, been it said, from the Foreign Office, resisted the blackmail policy of German-Italian diplomacy. Above all, by his years of experience abroad he has appreciated the appalling effect on British prestige, indeed on the cause of democracy in general, of the surrender to the policy of blackmail.

To anyone who has had occasion to follow events in Europe in the past decade, indeed since the Peace Conference, it is painfully obvious that Great Britain's failure to learn to "speak European," in M. Briand's pregnant phrase has been the root of all evil. Austria all along has been a test case.

If ever there was a victim of the continuing inter-State anarchy which effectively excludes any healthy national life, it is the orphan Austrian Republic. Because of its beggar's existence at the price of subservience to the interests of foreign capitalists the "independence" of Austria has, of course, been nothing but a diplomatists' fiction. If it was necessary, in order to remove the threat of German *Macht* from the new States carved out of the old Hapsburg Empire in their fledgling years, that the Supreme Council in 1919 should veto the *Anschluss*, it was equally

necessary openly and frankly to recognise that such action was no more and no less than an expression of the traditional doctrine of balance-of-power. And at least the League of Nations should have been formally entrusted with the task of administration of the estate, pending a final settlement, as in the analogous case of the Saar; otherwise there was no adequate reply to the charge that the Allies, having invoked the principle of self-determination for the Succession States, were deliberately flouting when it cut across their own interests. In the absence of any security-disarmament agreement superseding the old power-politics it was inevitable that sooner or later we should witness an all-in contest of the Great Powers over Austria's prostrate body. Nothing, however, was done to relieve the situation. For obvious historical and economic reasons Austria's future could not be secured without a collaboration of Germany, and there might indeed have been some hope of a gradual adjustment on the lines of a reconstructed Danubian economic system, with Germany obtaining the market which her industry needs, had not Great Britain and France, united only in their negative purpose, imposed their veto on the Customs Union project of 1931. That fateful negative may be said to have set in motion the National-Socialist avalanche throughout central and eastern Europe. And its folly has been only matched by the subsequent criminal negligence of the principal guardians of the 1919 settlement in leaving their ward to the tender mercies of the hereditary foe, Italy. No one who has visited Austria in recent years can have failed to appreciate that, if once the country's destiny was left to be decided by a trial of strength between Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany the outcome of such a "conflict" was a foregone conclusion. No one could fail to notice the almost hypnotic attraction of the personality of Herr Hitler himself, together with the appeal of German strength to Austrian weakness. Yet in spite of the ominous rumblings of the period 1931-34, not a finger was raised by the British Government for a *positive* solution of the problem of Austria, to implement, as with the fundamental security—disarmament problem, the principle of League *guardianship*—as contrasted with the *tutelage* of this or that Great Power. True, the British Government subscribed to a number of solemn

declarations of Britain's interest in the "independence" of Austria and frowned upon sundry German manifestations of the policy of the mailed fist. But there was in practice the same unreadiness to make of the League a useful instrument of peaceful change as there was to provide the essential basis of international security; and Herr Hitler, in an interview with Mr. Edward Price Bell, three years ago, could reasonably say "if the Germany of National Socialism has recourse to power diplomacy the reason is that it lives in a world of power-diplomacy." And meanwhile British public opinion, uninformed and prone to sentimentalize, grew to blame the war-fevered atmosphere of Europe upon France and the so-called *status quo* Powers; forgetting that Great Britain was equally responsible with France for the sorry plight of Austria, for example, since France and her girdle of small States were only given a free hand to establish their power-opposition as a *quid pro quo* for Britain's seizure of German colonies and the destruction of the Germany navy.

Since it was Herr Hitler's successful sabre-rattling at the expense of the unfortunate Dr. Schuschnigg which provoked the present British crisis, it was necessary, we suggest, to place the Austrian question in perspective. But what has been the immediate sequence of events?

To go no further back than last autumn; the achievement of the Nyon anti-piracy patrol, which was essentially Mr. Eden's triumph, was torpedoed—diplomatically speaking—within a fortnight by the forces hostile to him in London, to the consternation, be it said, of all who were following events in Geneva, not excluding the Foreign Office representatives. The next move, which inevitably undermined Mr. Eden's position, was the sudden decision of the Prime Minister to make a "friendly" approach to Herr Hitler over the head of the British Foreign Secretary. Mr. Neville Chamberlain did this against the better judgment of all his advisers and in spite of the complete rebuff which had attended a similar overture to Signor Mussolini in the previous August. The outcome of Lord Halifax's mission to Germany was entirely negative. But the dislocation within the Government which it revealed was sufficient encouragement to the Dictators for them to believe that now they had got the British Cabinet on the run. There followed the "promotion"—



read side-tracking—of Sir Robert Vansittart and further sinister intrigues for a “general settlement” with Germany on the entirely unwarranted assumption that the *Reich* could be bought off by the extension of foreign credits and *ad hoc* Committees of economic co-operation on the basis of the van Zeeland Report.

Finally, after the German weapon had broken in their hands, the same panicky circles, who have no grasp whatsoever of the fundamentals of Europe’s situation, traded upon Mr. Chamberlain’s innocence to press for a similar “friendly” approach to the Italian Government—again, if necessary, over the head of the Foreign Secretary. Overnight the “gramophone” Press, which had been assuring its readers that a settlement with Signor Mussolini was impossible so long as anti-British broadcasts, renewed piracy in the Mediterranean and continued intervention in Spain were the order of the day, put on the new record—and held out hopes of a return to the Gentleman’s Agreement of January, 1937. The evidence of panic counsels was so transparent that Signor Mussolini must have simply chortled with malice.

At this point the Austrian crisis supervened. Dr. Schuschnigg was the victim of a stratagem which can only properly be described as a gangsters’ hold-up. Signor Mussolini, naturally, kept his own counsel. Had he not discounted this German-Austrian *Gleichrichtung* ever since the early phase of the development of the Berlin-Rome axis? Thanks to the ostrich-like behaviour of London with regard to the Spanish war he and Herr Hitler had both a far bigger game to play in the Mediterranean and athwart the Atlantic route to the Cape. So, when reminded of their reiterated pledges of Austria’s “independence” the spokesmen of British policy could only shamefacedly profess that “they had no information”—or that, without the support of Italy, such declarations were devoid of meaning. After the Abyssinian fiasco this fact was patent, but it had never been openly and candidly admitted; and there were still nuclei of opinion in the various countries of Europe who simply did not believe it to be possible that Britain, the very artificer of balance-of-power principles, should now allow the whole conception to go by default, and watch the Austrian bastion being invested without raising a finger.

Undaunted—indeed, one supposes, hugging the illusion that the Austrian *coup* had disposed Signor Mussolini to welcome friendly advances—Mr. Chamberlain and his advisers proceeded to fall over themselves in their desire to “square” the junior partner of the anti-Comintern firm. Thus, at the umpteenth conversations between Mr. Eden and Count Grandi concerning the withdrawal of Italian “volunteers” from Spain—on February 18th—Mr. Chamberlain was present, and it transpires that, despite an utterly negative response, the Prime Minister was willing to waive all the fundamental points of difference!

It is the effect of yet another surrender to the policy of blackmail which matters. Herr Hitler's success in brutalizing Austria was bound, in any case, to clinch Germany's hegemony in Central and south-eastern Europe. But that, after his speech of defiance on the 20th and especially the taunts directed against Mr. Eden personally, the latter should appear to have been thrown to the “Fascist” wolves is the gravest element of the whole situation.

No wonder Mr. Eden, for once taking the offensive, should have thrown out his appeal to “the younger generation” at the Birmingham conference of the Junior Imperial League. There are millions of men and women of all parties and of no party who will echo his *cri de cœur* of ‘peace not only in our time but in yours’—which means, as he said, “no sacrifice of principles and no shirking of responsibilities merely to obtain quick results that may not be permanent . . .” By their last act, as by so many others, the “monstrous regiment of old women” at present disposing of Britain's destinies stand self-condemned. To “drop the pilot” at this juncture reveals a complete failure to understand the imponderables of the European situation.

The present writer belongs to that growing number of Englishmen which, in fact, wins every election—and is not represented in Parliament. Whether or not the present *désarroi* in British policy causes a new general election in the near future, one thing is certain: the emergence, and the entry into power, sooner or later, of a generation which, appreciating what is at stake, will steadfastly maintain “a more positive attitude by this country in Europe” (*cf* the statement issued after the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House on February 17th) thus upholding those principles of ordered freedom for which Mr. Anthony Eden stands.

## AGRICULTURAL POLICY

BY PROFESSOR R. G. STAPLEDON,

THE outstanding lesson to be learned from the various expedients adopted during recent critical years to save agriculture from bankruptcy is this : that apparently straightforward projects entail the most complicated, far-reaching, and in many of their ramifications unexpected, not to say undesirable, consequences. A corollary to this statement is that every change brought about in the production and handling of commodities must eventually react upon the land itself for good or for ill. Now practically all recent Government policy, up to the lime and slag policy and save for the de-rating of agricultural land, has been concerned solely and exclusively with commodities. Every one of these policies has, however, automatically had some influence on the land : what that influence was likely to be it has been nobody's concern to try and prognosticate. The commodities in question, moreover, would necessarily be produced by a variety of methods.

Herein lies the inherent weakness of all short-term policies (invariably based on commodities), indeed of all policies based on commodities as such—the finished article. Here is the urban mind, triumphantly led by the economists, at work cheerfully supposing that agriculture can be dealt with in terms of the factory, the raw material, and the finished product. The cold fact is that nothing can be produced in the agricultural “factory” without also constantly influencing the very substance and basic structure of the factory itself, while, for that matter, it is quite impossible to make a real distinction between factory and raw material, or in many instances between raw material and finished product. All movement on a well-organized farm goes in circles : in a factory movement proceeds along straight lines, bifurcating and deviating perhaps, but always in straight lines. These are the fundamental and



irreconcilable differences between agriculture and manufacture, and the realization of these differences must necessarily be the only mental foundation upon which it is possible to think out the essentials of a stable long-term policy for agriculture. The factory—and the soil is the *real* factory (highly unstable and ever changing though it be)—must be looked after continuously and kept up to a proper standard of efficiency. What standard? That is the first question to be settled. By merely asking this question we are at once set off on the right lines, for we must next ask, what, precisely, in the interest of the nation at this time and at all times, do we expect our soil, that is to say the land of this country, to do for us?

It follows that in framing a long-term policy for agriculture the first thing to do is to look ahead and to endeavour to form a correct estimate of the most menacing of possible eventualities. There are three: war, the threatened rapid fall in birth-rate and the unlikelihood of overseas countries being able to supply us with food as cheaply and as abundantly as heretofore. Of these three dangers decreasing population is probably by far the most serious. Without thinking of war, and without taking an exaggerated view of the importance to mankind of the British peoples, half a dozen cogent reasons spring to mind why a diminished population would be a first-class catastrophe to the people contributing to it. The population problem is of prime urgency, because, if the threatened danger is to be met, action must be taken at once. It is a reasonable hypothesis to put forward, and only reasoned speculation is here possible, that a contented rural population would rear larger families than even a contented urban population. Accept this proposition—and there is evidence in favour of its acceptance—and it is evident that the first cornerstone in our agricultural policy would have to be to ensure as large and as contented a rural population as possible. Great emphasis is to be laid on *contented*; this implies that there must be no undue disparity between rural and urban wages and housing conditions. Indeed that this disparity should be immediately brought to an end is probably the most urgent need of rural Britain to-day.

War! The last war taught us the dangers and the immense expense involved in not being agriculturally prepared. To-day,

on balance, and for the sake of argument, let it be granted that we are less vulnerable than we were in 1917 : even so, no living man dare prognosticate how we shall stand ten or twenty years hence in relation to scientific developments in the arts of destruction and of killing. In order then to frame our long-term policy it is necessary to decide in advance what commodities in particular will be required, and in what relative proportion to each other during the stress of war—and this chiefly in the interest ensuring adequate soil fertility for war needs.

Owing to the very real menace of soil erosion and of soil depletion methods of husbandry abroad must substantially change, costs of production are likely steadily to rise, to the disadvantage of the British housewife and to the advantage of the home farmer, while certain commodities may actually go scarce sooner than we expect. He who eventually shoulders the task of framing a long-term policy for British agriculture must assuredly hold all the long-term contingencies here enumerated clearly in mind.

What are the needs of to-day ? First and foremost that we should produce here at home enough of such foods as must be eaten fresh. This matter of fresh food has both its immediate and its longer period significance. The biochemist has only just begun his work. In the first place freshness is a relative term, on the one hand it may very likely be found that eggs and vegetables, and perhaps many other commodities, to be of maximum health value should be eaten fresher than anybody thinks they should, while other commodities not now put in the "fresh" class may eventually have to be so placed. After freshness as such must be placed the whole question of quality, quality considered primarily from the point of view of human health. There remains a great deal of definition to be done relative to quality. But the immediate point is that agricultural methods are likely to need revision when *quality* rather than *cheapness* dominates the outlook of mankind.

The question of the agricultural population is urgent from the point of view of the immediate needs of agriculture, let alone any expansion. By some it is argued that in view of the rapid developments in mechanization we are far from having attained to maximum output per man. Even so, the higher the production, whatever the methods, relatively the greater the

employment in the country : the more animals to be looked after, larger harvests to be moved about on and off the farm, the greater the transportation of fertilizers, and of " finished " products. The last word, however, has certainly not been said—far from it—as to the economic size of holdings and as to the amount of labour that could be fruitfully employed on holdings of various types and sizes. We are, moreover, a long way from having attained to the high-water mark in the production of vegetables, and eggs and livestock products in general, which are susceptible only to a certain amount of mechanization.

To argue that agriculture can no longer be the basis for a reasonably large rural population is manifestly ridiculous ; such an argument is tenable only if it can be proved that it is to the country's advantage now and always to grow the absolute minimum of food for itself.

British agricultural policy, then, must be one that, firstly, ensures a large rural population, and, secondly, that maintains the maximum acreage of the country in a condition capable of high production. It would seem important to lay emphasis on " a condition suitable for high production " rather than on any particular commodity. In the first place peace and war if not actually calling for different commodities call for different proportions between commodities. World conditions are in such a state of flux, and scientific developments so rapid, that there is no guarantee of supplies of any particular commodity being cheaper, or in some cases more plentiful, from overseas sources than from home production at any give date within the next twenty to fifty years. As to certain commodities we should immediately work up to optimum output for the health of the nation in respect of milk, vegetables and possibly eggs also, and, maybe, quality meat as well.

In short, a sane long-term policy must be one which is as interested in what the country could grow " next " year, as in what it is actually growing " this " year, and behind the framing of the policy must be the acute realization that the country cannot grow the maximum of any set of commodities unless there is enough fully trained labour on the land to do so, and unless there are enough farmers mentally, technically and mechanically equipped for cultivation and for high production.



This paper is only concerned with the essentials of a sane long-term agricultural policy: whether the country is sufficiently alive to the dangers ahead to make the necessary changes in policy in order to render it possible, and before it is too late, to launch a real agricultural and rural policy is another matter.

The essentials, let it be repeated, are farmers, men and acres—fertile acres to boot! Mr. Christopher Turnor, than whom nobody has a wider experience of agricultural conditions, has recently and forcefully urged the need of exhaustive inquiry. All said and done, in the last resort everything comes down to men and acres. In the absolute sense at the present time, and for some time to come, men are not limited. Acres in a small country with a large population making all manner of agricultural and non-agricultural calls on its land surface are exceedingly limited. To-day then, and in any event for several generations, acres are the master factor in the whole situation. How stand we for acres, and upon what lines is it desirable to conduct exhaustive inquiries into the quantity and quality of available acres? To this, the basic factor, the closing portion of our brief review will be devoted.

At the outset let us remind ourselves—here we are permitting ourselves, and legitimately enough in this case, an industrial analogy—that when Britain started on her re-armament the greatest difficulties and the greatest delays were connected with the setting up of factories and the accumulation of raw material; in short, with problems equivalent to the obtaining of acres for agricultural development. More than this, re-armament has been greatly concerned with acres in their solid and spatial reality. Factory sites, the bespoiling of agricultural land for the winning of minerals, training grounds, camps, munition dumps, all in the aggregate making heavy annual inroads on agricultural land, and not infrequently on some of the very best of agricultural land. All this, moreover, on top of the heavy and ill-co-ordinated raids that for the last twenty years and more urban and industrial developments have been making on Land.

The first thing to be found out is what exactly has been and what is likely to be the annual increment of all this commandeering. In recent years it has certainly exceeded 50,000 acres and is probably now not far short of 100,000 acres per annum. The

second need is to formulate a sound basis for assessing the optimum use of land—of all land, of every parcel of land.\* When we come to such land as the urban-ravager, and the suppositious necessities of defence leave over for agriculture, we have to regard maximum need in the interest of soil fertility and general agricultural utility as of greater immediate moment than optimum use in respect of the production of any particular crop. We must then schedule our acres, first in relation to optimum use from the point of view of all the purposes to which land can be put, and then schedule the agricultural residue in terms of maximum need (in relation to soil fertility and general agricultural utility, let it be again emphasized) and in terms of potential rather than of actual present optimum use.

Need and potential use, then, are to be our criteria, and our guiding principles, in obtaining information leading to the formulation of a sane agricultural policy. This implies that information is urgently needed, not so much as to the acreage in the several crops and as to the yield and excellence of the crops (this our statistics give us), but as to how these crop acreages are disposed of in relation to systems of farming, and then how different systems of farming react upon first, soil fertility, and secondly, flexibility in commodity production. Data on ploughability and equipment are perhaps the most essential of all.

Systems of farming in relation to soil, flexibility and equipment in this country I shall presume to define as follows :

*Arable.* When the plough and crop cultivation is taken over practically the whole of the farm :

- (a) When leys† do not contribute to the rotation of crops ;
- (b) When leys of no longer than two years' duration contribute to the rotation, and when the area in leys does not exceed one-sixth of the land under cultivation.

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\*The argument here developed and the terminology employed are in sympathy with—and an extension of—the thesis propounded by Lord Bledisloe over a year ago, and amplified by Mr. G. M. Young in a recent letter to *The Times*.

†The meaning and the significance of the ley must be clearly understood. A ley is a field sown down to grass and such as will be left down to grass—ideally at all events—for a pre-defined and definite number of years, one, two, . . . four, . . . six, and seldom more than twelve. The underlying idea is grass as a crop, but equally important is the ploughed down sod in relation to the enhancement and maintenance of soil fertility. The ley, properly understood and properly employed, has more to contribute to flexibility and soil fertility, and therefore is a more important factor influencing a sane long-term agricultural policy than any other single crop.

These systems properly conducted constitute high farming: they entail full equipment for crop production but not necessarily for animal production; they maintain, or are capable of maintaining, soil fertility at a high level and permit of great flexibility at short notice. They are, however, easily abused. Only a limited area of the country is adapted to these systems. What area of each, having regard to modern knowledge, cheap fertilizers and modern machinery?

*Permanent Grass.*—When the whole farm is in grass and the plough is never used; no cropping. The number of such farms ill-managed and on poor to very poor permanent grass full of weeds is far in excess of those well managed. The productivity of our permanent grass farms as a whole is lower in relation to potentialities, and the soil less cared for in relation to need, than is the case with other of the systems we adopt. This system makes heavier calls on imported feeding stuffs in relation to potentialities for the production of winter rations on the farms than any other. Much of the dairy farming as now practised on permanent grass is such as totally to ignore both the optimum use and maximum need of the fields of the farm.

*Nondescript.*—When one portion of the farm, frequently less than one-third, is kept under rotation and the remainder in permanent grass. Taking the country as a whole the preponderant acreage would probably be found to be under this system. Within obvious limitations there is scope for high farming under this system, but the average of achievement in relation to potentialities is lamentably low. This system, even in the hands of the worst practitioners, ranks higher than the all-permanent grass system, because cultivation if only in an undertone is not a lost art, and the farm itself at least contributes something more than inferior hay to the winter ration.

*Alternate Husbandry.* i.e., when the plough is taken in rotation over all the ploughable fields of the farm. This system is based on the ley. The fields actually in leys at any time may vary from about 25 per cent. to over 80 per cent. of the whole farm. Properly conducted this system builds up fertility more rapidly and more certainly than any except the highest arable farming. The grass from the leys will be weed-free, highly nutritious and available for a greatly extended grazing season.



The system is supremely flexible, its practitioners are necessarily informed stock-masters and skilled cultivators. They are equipped for both animal and crop husbandry.

As to the gross acreage and the number of farms devoted to each system, although some of the data necessary for classification are available, far too many are totally lacking. Anything approaching an accurate statement is utterly impossible.

To have accurately mapped the country in terms of these systems is a basic necessity from the points of view alike of formulating a long-term policy and taking reasoned measures in respect of war danger.

Look at the matter how we will, it is the acreage under permanent grass that always has been and always must be the mirror which reflects our progress away from or towards a sane long-term policy for agriculture. We have not yet begun to move forward. To-day as never before we have the technical and mechanical equipment available to leap forward at the very first signs of dawning national sanity, and we have the experience of men like Hosier and a number of far-seeing pioneers who have grasped the significance of modern developments and—who thanks to initiative nowhere surpassed in the sphere of progressive enterprise—have forged, or shown that it is easily possible to forge, the appropriate methods of farm practice.

Put quite tersely the basic principle that must underlie our policy can only be a striving to eliminate as far as absolutely possible nondescript and permanent grass farming from our agricultural practices. High arable farming should be in progress on all situations suitable for it, and alternate husbandry—ley farming in short—on all the rest of the country that *can be farmed*. It is farmers that the country wants, for “to be a farmer” is to “cultivate the land.”

We have now brought our argument to a single issue. How many acres of Great Britain can *not* be farmed, or ought not, in the interest of agriculture itself, to be farmed. How many acres, that is to say, is it both necessary and legitimate to leave in permanent grass? It is to be conceded that a few fields in permanent grass may be necessary in some circumstances both to the arable and to the ley farmer, and it may be legitimate to

keep a small proportion of the very best permanent grass (a small acreage anyway) intact.

In a paper read in London on May 13th, 1936,\* the writer brought forward a considered estimate to show that in England and Wales of permanent grass, completely deteriorated long leys and of rough grazings below the 1,500 ft. contour there were something of the order of  $16\frac{1}{4}$  million acres of land in relation to potentialities more or less neglected and much of it absolutely derelict. No less an area than 43 per cent of the land surface of England and Wales by no manner of means pulling its weight in the interest of food production.

To-day, such is our lack of reliable evidence, it is impossible to say how large a proportion of that  $16\frac{1}{4}$  million acres could be brought under arable or ley farming—how much, in short, is ploughable and ought to be ploughed. The amount is probably not short of 8 million acres, and may well be in excess of that.

To sum up and to conclude. The basis of a permanent and stable agricultural policy must necessarily be sought for in terms of farmers, men and acres. When we say farmers we mean men equipped for and conversant in the arts of cultivation and crop production. In absolutes, since this is a small country with a large population, acres are the ultimate limiting factor. Therefore, the basic consideration is that of the acres in their qualitative and quantitative aspects, and consequently the first necessity in an approach towards a long-term policy for agriculture is to ascertain where we stand as to acres, and how we stand in respect of systems of farming appropriate to those acres. Remembering that a system of farming is only appropriate if it holds a just balance between optimum use of the fields (in terms of healthy food fit for humans to eat) and maximum need in respect of soil fertility—and if it is also flexible. These are hard sayings, doubly hard because true, and they are sayings that cut deep into all the political and economic tenets that have dominated the thought of this country for a hundred years and more.

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\*See "The Case for Land Improvement and Reclamation." J. Roy. Soc. Arts. Vol. lxxxiv. July, 1936.

## BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN BALANCE

BY LIONEL M. GELBER.

INSIDE Europe a free hand for herself, outside Europe a free hand for Great Britain—this, in sum, is the substance of Germany's vision, a clue perhaps not only to what is in the front of her mind but to what may also be at the back of her policy. Now in a world progressively shorn of collective safeguards British, as well as German, calculations must at bottom be founded on elements of individual and associated power. For nothing less is at stake than the European balance. It is no easy task to turn down Germany on disputed grounds of national honour or international morality alone. There is a deep-rooted feeling in Great Britain that because of the way she was handled after 1918 she must be treated with indulgence now, that, however reprehensible her conduct at home and abroad, amends have yet to be made to her. No doubt the argument flies to an extreme when it condones the sinister error, so fatal alike to European order and the British Commonwealth, that race, nationality and the State must be co-extensive; when, as though neither Masaryk nor Benes, Dolfuss nor Schuschnigg, had ever existed, it invokes exclusively in Germany's favour the blessed name of self-determination; and when, so irrational are the emotions aroused, the odd spectacle is furnished of Wilsonian idealism harnessed to the rule of the strong. But what has yet to be explained is why, if it be true that the *status quo* in Europe inhibits unjustly a people so virile and so dynamic as the Germans, this complaint should be applied more seldom to the Far East where, for reasons akin to their discontent with the post-war treaties, the Japanese are demonstrating how such notions work in practice.

The problem is no new one. From the days of the Tudors to those of Louis XIV, from Bonaparte to the Emperor William II, it has been a cardinal maxim of British policy to insist upon



the free passage of the Narrow Seas, to keep the Low Countries out of hostile hands and to oppose the domination of Europe by any single aggressive Power or group of Powers. During the Victorian era matchless naval strength and unchallengeable industrial supremacy gave Great Britain a measure of detachment from Continental dissensions and the age-old struggle between Gaul, Teuton and Slav; to the very last Salisbury harboured what Joseph Chamberlain perceived was already obsolete, the luxury conception of the British rôle as *la puissance médiatrice*. In the twentieth century the issue was again faced squarely first by Lansdowne and then by Grey; the military superiority of Germany disturbed them before her naval aspirations widened the gulf irrevocably. Then came 1914-18, the invasion of Belgium and France, Europe in flames, the grim fulfilment of everything Lansdowne and Grey had feared and foreseen. The lesson of those years has not, however, been forgotten. In 1936 when Germany violated the Locarno Treaty Great Britain extended to Belgium and France military guarantees, exact commitments (modified and renewed a year later) which the pre-war Entente did not possess and clear testimony to her dependence in the present as in the past on the European equilibrium.

But does it suffice merely to be content with what Lord Baldwin has called our frontier on the Rhine? Is it not an illusion to think that Great Britain can withdraw securely behind Anglo-French ramparts while Germany imposes her ruthless will everywhere else in Europe? Yet beneath the attempt to induce France to drop all her Eastern commitments—which might indirectly involve Great Britain in war across the Rhine—lies the conviction that as recompense for their Western immunity the Franco-British Entente should encourage or at least assent to German ascendancy in Bohemia, Austria and beyond. Divided counsels in Great Britain are worth an army corps to Germany, and this theory has strong backing. What its adoption must entail is plain enough. Temporarily removing one peril it would create another even more deadly in the end. Accorded a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe,—and that is what the new arrangement with Austria may well mean—Germany could build a power so immense and so irresistible that in turn the West will

be entirely at her mercy. The brilliant sweep of her conquests and arms from 1866 to 1918, her key-position at the heart of the continent, her interior lines of communication, her genius for organization, her national character and mentality—none of these can be left out of account. And if Sadowa preceded Sedan the interval between them was short.

Of the two barriers on Germany's south-eastward path one is less rigid than the other. Austria, moreover, is not only more vulnerable, strategically and diplomatically, than Czechoslovakia but, if she breaks under the weight brought to bear by her great neighbour from within and from without her borders, the Czechs would in any case be encircled—deserted by the disaffected section of the Sudeten minority, their further political independence automatically untenable. *Realpolitik* must turn friendships no less than enmities to account, and the main key to the gates of Vienna has hitherto reposed in Rome. On it, however, Mussolini's grip is visibly relaxing. To-day with German sympathy Italy has given such large hostages to fortune, is so impoverished by her Abyssinian and Spanish adventures, so entangled outside Central Europe with France and Great Britain, that the Italo-German agreement of 1936 about Austria has been shown to be rather a broken need. For the famous axis is not an Italian weapon but a German bar behind which is confined the prisoner of Rome.

More almost than anything else what must influence the European balance for good or ill are the relations of Moscow with the Western capitals. To Hitlerian diplomacy the fiction that between the ideologies of Right and Left there can be no middle way has been an undeniable asset; shielded by the anti-Communist crusade Germany has obtained latitude that would have been incredible before 1914 to pursue traditional and purely national designs of European power. Yet in determining the British attitude towards Berlin and Moscow alike the governing factor can no longer be political theory or moral judgment but the map of Europe; geography has decreed, and history teaches, that the rise of an ambitious, eruptive Power nearby is an immeasurably greater hazard to the British Isles than the machinations of one that is both more self-contained and more remote. By every dispassionate calculation of power

politics if Russia and the Anglo-French Entente have similar interests in Central and Eastern Europe they may, in a spirit not of mutual esteem but of common exigency, be expected to stand together. What Moscow no less than London has to decide is whether, granting that they possess such interests, they are disposed again to collaborate in their support.

Russia's pacts of non-aggression, her entry into the League of Nations and her treaties of mutual assistance with France and Czechoslovakia were a natural response to the demagogic rattle of the Hitlerian sabre. By some English champions of the new *Drang nach Osten* Russo-German tension has been regarded as not altogether unfortunate; if the Soviet and the Third Reich were embroiled against each other the rest of Europe might breathe more freely. But the plain fact is that before Germany could make inroads in southern Russia or annex the Ukraine the whole of Central and Eastern Europe must come into her grasp; and if that happened the German shadow would lie as heavily over the West as over the East. And what if Russia herself suffers a change of heart? Noting sardonically the triumphs of Italo-German diplomacy in the Abyssinian, Locarno and Spanish controversies she may wonder whether she will not be left by the Western Powers with most of the burden of stemming the eastward Nazi tide; whether—the remilitarization of the Rhineland being here a critical point—without them it is one she can or should bear; whether in such a case antagonism even to Hitler is really worth her while. And should Russia, sceptical of the value of further co-operation with Great Britain and France (although it has contributed weightily to the European balance and therefore to her own advantage), now conclude that her best line of defence is, after all, her own frontier, would not the German task be enormously simplified?

Where bluster fails smoother accents may succeed. Divested of its ideological trappings, Hitler's truculent effort to expel Russia from the councils of Europe is an endeavour to isolate her so as to hamstring collective security, impair the French system, weaken Czechoslovakia and set in train that mastery of the Danubian basin which must be the foundation of his continental power. But may not events in the Far East slowly evoke a drastic revision of policy? So long as there was a prospect of



simultaneous Japanese pressure on Asiatic Russia some Nazis could toy with grandiose projects of taking in their stride along with the smaller Eastern States the outer fringes of the Soviet—although British neutrality and the use of Polish soil for the German legions might also have been essential. But to these plans does not Japan's large-scale war in China constitute a rebuff as shattering as it was unexpected? For the more her blood and treasure are poured out below the Great Wall the lower must sink her stock in any well-timed anti-Russian enterprise. Thus Russia, despite the execution of Tukhachevsky and his colleagues, despite the loss of her most talented military leaders—and the closer unity of the high command with the *régime* may in itself be adequate compensation—is much more secure than she was a year ago; the threat of a joint German-Japanese onslaught correspondingly less real. And, for the moment, in this sense, too, China's anguish is to some extent the price of Europe's peace. But must Germany forswear her cherished aims altogether because Japan has embarked on war in the cause of Japanese rather than German expansion? A military understanding with Tokio being ruled out, would not a political understanding with Moscow serve her more limited purposes better?

The *Reichswehr* at least may think so and (Ministerial predilections notwithstanding) they have still a great part to play. Certainly it would enable them to deal with Poland as they had originally intended or with less danger of paralysing interference turn at once south-eastward where much awaits them before Russian soil is even touched. On the Rapallo policy they have always looked with favour, and the treaty which Germany first signed with Russia in 1922 was not only renewed in 1933 by Hitler himself but in spite of the subsequent anti-Soviet campaign has never been denounced. The *Reichswehr* and the Red Army have a long record of fellowship, while German capitalists might again desire opportunities they previously enjoyed in developing Soviet industry. Whatever the ideological pretext, Hitler has tried to sever the tie between Russia, Czechoslovakia, France and the League of Nations for strategic reasons with which every German statesman since Bismarck has been painfully familiar; the West not being intimidated by the *furor teutonicus* and the

wire to the Kremlin having never irreparably been cut he may undertake to gain his ends at Moscow itself. And neither for the Soviet nor for the Third Reich would that mean a more startling metamorphosis in foreign policy than others they have undergone; before Hitler's pact with Pilsudski the relations of Germany with Poland seemed as irremediably bad as they now do with Russia. Since Bismarck's day Germany has always strengthened the chain of her own "encirclement"; if she jettisons her policy of encircling the Soviet she may break a link which she forged against herself. With Japan engrossed more than ever in China and with Italy's gaze fixed overseas it is the Western Powers rather than Moscow who have most to yield to the so-called counter-League of Rome, Berlin and Tokio. In China and Central Europe alike the ultimate political and economic interests of Germany are not those of her present associates; by a union of forces she must help them—as they must help her—to extort from Great Britain and France more than they could each have procured alone in order to offset discrepancies which render their combination fundamentally so unstable. A fit alignment for power-diplomacy at London and Paris, the impermanent triangular coalition is not an insuperable obstacle between Berlin and Moscow.

What then British opinion must appreciate is that Russia dwells under no inescapable obligation to support the European balance. Even now it is not improbable that her reawakening nationalism, with an eye to the enemies by whom she is encompassed, can in some degree be traced to disappointment at the poor fruits of collaboration with Western internationalism. And if Hitler provoked the emergence of Soviet diplomacy from its comparative seclusion he also can purchase its retirement to something like its former state.

In these circumstances the British objective should be clear. The European equipoise to be maintained at all must be steady at both ends. It is the policy of the British Government to circumvent ideological groupings, to work irrespective of internal *régimes* with every Power bent upon peace; and what is sauce for the German goose is sauce for the Russian gander. For by repudiating the League of Nations the Rome—Berlin—Tokio camp have created that which Great Britain seeks to

dispel ; between Russia and the West, however, so long as she is represented at Geneva, the machinery for co-operation remains. The Soviet may still prefer to avoid dependence on German goodwill, and it would be a blunder of the first magnitude if Anglo-French diplomacy allowed that preference to wither in exasperation and despair. To emasculate the Covenant so that Russia as well as the smaller Eastern States could rely no longer on any form of collective security may be further to push them one by one into Hitler's arms ; and if the Soviet pacts with France and Czechoslovakia were deprived of all substance the process would only be accelerated. Just as Grey and his contemporaries, beset with the overweening pretensions of Germany, could not afford to perpetuate Anglo-Russian misunderstanding, so neither can the British Government to-day. There is no question of a fastidious choice between rival creeds or of deciding whether or not the Soviet tyranny outstrips the worst iniquities of the Tsardom. In every way save one Great Britain and Germany had more in common before the War than Great Britain and Russia ; in every way save one the same may even be true again. But that one exception was and is crucial. The disappearance from European politics of the Russian counterpoise would mean that the Third Reich had achieved a goal for which Imperial Germany strove in vain. So dire a setback, unless the balance of power has lost its importance for Great Britain, unless geography is a snare and history a delusion, it is now the business of British statesmanship to do what it can to prevent.

If there is no Russian withdrawal and the French system does not wholly dissolve, Czechoslovakia may face the future with renewed confidence. As for Austria, the weakest of the dykes against the surging German flood, her fate is necessarily influenced by British relations with yet another Great Power. Of that point indeed Mr. Baldwin's Government seem, during the Italo-Ethiopian crisis, to have been fully aware ; it looks like being the trump card up Mussolini's sleeve at present. For the vindication of the Covenant in 1935, even if collectively feasible, might not only have hastened the collapse of Italy but also—with the relics of the League providing a battered trophy for a further Hitlerian triumph—have expedited the surrender to



Germany of Central Europe. Ironical as it may now appear the fact is that on the European continent Great Britain and Italy are natural allies. Signor Mussolini must know perfectly well that his vigil on the Brenner is an Anglo-French interest which cannot endure if his *régime* crumbles and chaos ensues; the British, on the other hand, knowing equally well that he dare not forfeit Italy's European position, refuse to pay him for what is, after all, his primary duty to his own country. It is a trial of strength, one in which, if unduly prolonged, neither of the contestants but Hitler will be the winner. A fillip to his prestige, concrete advantages to embody it—these are Mussolini's immediate requirements. For, unless he is soon to find himself in complete vassalage to Berlin with scarcely equivalent gains elsewhere, a settlement from Great Britain and France must be extracted at an early date.

If there is a Franco-British deal with Italy what becomes of the Covenant, the rule of law, the decencies of international life? Perhaps it is no mere question of letting justice be done, though the Mediterranean heavens fall. For Geneva to insist unavailingly upon the restoration of one primitive African State may be to fail while yet there is time to preserve the freedom of others in Europe itself. Will conscience be salved, the decencies of international life upheld, will the Covenant, the rule of law be in a healthier condition when most of Central and Eastern Europe is converted into a German province? And, even from an ideological point of view, it must be accounted a feeble victory for democracy if Fascism gives way simply to enhance Nazi predominance. For here is no clean-cut decision between right and wrong but a choice of the lesser evil. There are those who distinguish between a British policy founded on the Covenant and one guided by the principle of the balance of power. Whether or not the contrast was once valid it is in the circumstances of to-day a false antithesis, a total misconception of the necessities of the case. Only by maintaining the balance of power can Great Britain and France support a European order in which the ideals of the League may somehow linger and in some happier hour even flourish again. If the equilibrium is demolished, the League goes irretrievably and much else besides.

Conducted with prudence and skill British diplomacy may yet steer mankind away from disaster. Ceaselessly and impressively the mounting armaments and deepening friendships of Great Britain tend to repair her damaged authority. That, despite the high-flown insolence of Japan in the Far East, matters nearer home come first, the concentration of the fleet in and about European waters abundantly indicates. Nor are further continental commitments, of which public opinion might not approve, wholly indispensable. In the present situation uncertainty about British intentions may serve as a deterrent to German expansion only less effective than formal but impracticable iron-clad guarantees. There are circumstances in which imprecision is the bane of international negotiation; there can be circumstances in which it may prove a tower of strength. The mere fact that Hitler has always sought an understanding with Great Britain, of which the premise would be that she disinterest herself in Central and Eastern Europe, shows that unless he gets it he is afraid to move. So long as Great Britain withholds her consent to a free hand, there will be a haunting dread at Berlin that she may in any ultimate crisis intervene. And if Germany remembers the kind of mistake about Great Britain that was made in 1914, the indefinite, the unpredictable nature of the British attitude in an emergency should keep alive in German calculations a saving anxiety not to repeat it.

Herr Hitler, may of course, take a chance on the British love of peace. The danger will be intensified if important sections of the public mind in Great Britain, by finding excuses for him in advance, incite him, as they often do, to some reckless action; if, too, at critical junctures Ministers themselves hamper their own diplomatic influence by saying gratuitously that they will not run the risk of war. It may be so, but why say it? A studied vagueness which will keep Hitler guessing cannot add to the perils confronting Central and Eastern Europe; it might, the potential threat of British participation being what it is, keep them in abeyance. The special Entente problem of July—August, 1914, will not again arise—not, at any rate, in the same shape; the Anglo-French military guarantees of 1936-37 are explicit and comprehensive. But the people and Parliament of Great Britain still retain the liberty to decide on

the merits of each case elsewhere in Europe as it occurs. To barter away that liberty might be to bring about the very predicament that it must be the supreme object of British policy to avert.

Nor will the growth of English-speaking solidarity—sympathy with Great Britain in the Dominions and the United States alike—have a negligible effect on the chancelleries of Europe. Experience indeed should warn Berlin that here, too, is another unknown quantity with which it would be foolhardy not to reckon. For much that has happened since the Treaty of Versailles, Great Britain and the United States are apt to blame each other ; in any final crisis what draws them closer is a view of human society which transcends every difference, however pronounced, of outlook, geography and tradition. And Great Britain must make the most of this fact even though, in the absence of continuous collaboration such as is feasible with France, British policy may of necessity resort to disillusioning compromises. Properly understood it is a vital interest of the United States, as of the British Commonwealth as a whole, that Great Britain should be able to maintain the European equilibrium, for with it is bound up not only her own security and independence but the distribution of power all the world over. At a time of profound disquiet it is a heartening sign of their faith and temper that in free countries on both sides of the Atlantic so many voices should clamour for a common ideological front dedicated to the defence of democracy ; a programme which contemplates improved relations with the Russian and Italian dictatorships, if not utterly repugnant, assuredly must exercise less popular appeal. To buttress the continental balance may none the less be the sole means of upholding an international order in which the democratic institutions of both Western Europe and the New World can safely survive to await the dawn of a better day. For what the morrow will bring no man can tell, but if the unity of the English-speaking peoples stands unshaken and infuses into the diplomacy of peace reserves of strength as vast as they are undefined, the politics of war may yet be overawed.



## THE MISCHIEF IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

BY Air-Commodore L. E. O. CHARLTON

THE British Government's policy of non-intervention in Spain is now much better understood on all sides. It is recognized that first of all the expedient was devised to restore a civil character to the Spanish Civil War; and later, when its international significance was unmistakable, the policy was persisted in to prevent the local conflict overspreading and becoming a European conflagration. Our armaments were low, a fact which was only too apparent during the Abyssinian crisis, and we were in no shape to defend ourselves if war did come. And yet in doing so we overlooked a possibility as regards the outcome of the struggle which contains the seeds of a danger to the Empire as great as any it has ever had to face. We overlooked the consequence to the British imperium, and the effect on an already complicated Mediterranean situation, should General Franco win the war.

The precise part which this inland waterway, 1927 miles in length from Gibraltar to Port Said, plays in our Imperial economy is perhaps not wholly understood. Since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 we know it mostly as a short-cut route by sea to India and the Far East. Since the coming of commercial aviation we recognize its intimate connection with air transport in the chain of Imperial communications, and how its use in this respect reinforces air power. And now, later still, we hear of the two ports, Tripoli and Haifa, at its eastern end as pipe-line terminals for Iraq oil. This is not quite the sum-total of our general knowledge on the subject, for there are the key-points on the high road to consider, Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus, together with Egypt where we must still maintain a garrison. But in the main it is as an arterial highway that we regard it, for commerce mostly, with natural sentry-posts along the route, and men-of-war patrols, to ensure its protection.

That, however, is not the half of the Mediterranean's real importance in our Imperial scheme. If it ceased to be a thoroughway safe for use it would be no difficult matter to deroute all cargo vessels round the Cape. With the exception of oil very few necessities are imported from countries on its seaboard, and as for that commodity less than 15 per cent. of our total requirement originates either in Black Sea or in Mediterranean ports. As for our garrisons, are they not well situated to defend themselves, and would not the activities of the Navy be a further shield and guard? On the face of it war with a Mediterranean power does not even begin to spell the word disaster.

Appearances are apt to be deceptive, and to show that they may be so in this instance it is necessary to describe briefly the effect which the Suez Canal has had on our programme of Imperial expansion. When that project was first mooted by de Lesseps British diplomacy did all it could to foil the undertaking, Lord Palmerston even telling him by word of mouth, and with slight inconsequence, that it was a physical impossibility, that if it were constructed it would injure British maritime supremacy, and that, in any case, it was nothing but a device for French interference in the Near-East. Seven years later Disraeli purchased the whole block of Khedivial shares, and financial ownership began to pass to Great Britain. But mere profit was not our main concern. De Lesseps had not only cut a canal, he had also altered an Imperial policy. For safety's sake it had now become necessary to protect this tenuous strip of water by every means in our power, and accordingly our efforts were at once directed towards the acquisition of, or the suzerainty over, all adjoining territory the position of which might be interpreted as a threat, direct or indirect, against either of its banks.

We consolidated our hold on Egypt, taking in the hinterland of the Sudan, and when the Anglo-French Agreement, thanks to the combined efforts of King Edward VII. and Lord Lansdowne, was signed in 1904 we heaved vast sighs of relief at the free hand which was thereby given us. Aden, now at last a colony, together with Perim, became the guardian of the Bab el Mandeb, and British Somaliland on the opposite shore of the gulf was declared a Protectorate in 1884. The whole belt of land with

its seaboard on the eastern Mediterranean and lying between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf became our vital concern, and if the Kaiser, hoping to make his *Drang nach Osten* dream come true, had been given the Bagdad railway concession, we were prepared for war.

During the Great War that effort was repeated, and when by supreme exertion we thrust back Turkey in Mesopotamia as well as in Syria and Palestine we were still mindful of the need of territorial bastions in those parts for the outlying protection of the short-cut route. The result is as we know it now. Iraq, at first a mandate but now independent, is under treaty obligation to permit an Air Force garrison. Palestine and Transjordan, still mandates, are in our occupation. The Hadramaut between Yemen and Oman, is covered by the Protectorate of Aden. The Bahrein Islands, key position to the Persian Gulf are in our possession, the Sultanate of Koweit is under our protection, while that of Oman and the two peninsulas of Qatar and Mussandam have a special relationship with the British Government. We have in short, stone by stone, erected a Near-Eastern pyramid of power in order that our sea and air routes traversing those regions shall not be liable to interference in case of war.

Such in brief are the consequences which the accomplishment of de Lesseps project brought in train, and it is in the maintenance of this pyramid of power that the real significance to us of the Mediterranean lies. For if it fell apart owing to successful enemy action in that sea, so that our garrisons were cut off from reinforcement and the territory overrun, it would be a blow to our prestige and a material loss which might disintegrate the Empire. It would mean, in fact, the near removal from the girdling world chain of our imperial responsibilities of a middle piece consisting of the Mediterranean 2,000 miles in length, and of all that part of the land-bridge between the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the head waters of the Persian Gulf which forms a vital communicating link 'twixt East and West. In analogy the effect would be that of the sudden elimination of Clapham Junction as a uniquely important traffic link on the Southern Railway system.

So much for the Mediterranean considered as a British right



of way in peace, and as an area for sea manœuvre in time of war. For France as well it is of extreme importance and, as her fortunes are at present indissolubly linked with ours, she also must be considered in the same connection. France derives more than 50 per cent. of her oil imports from the Eastern Mediterranean, and yet it is at the Western end that she must have sea command in war or be shorn of a large proportion of her military man-power for use on European fronts. Her war plans are calculated on the basis of free, uninterrupted passage for her troop transports between the North African ports and those of disembarcation on her southern coast. It is reasonable to assume that the cutting off of her Mediterranean oil supplies would have no immediate effect, and that, indeed, the loss from that source could be made up from increased activity in oil-fields elsewhere. On the other hand, if she were deprived of the services of her colonial army the result, unless the war were decided in the air off-hand, would be a fatal handicap. For our own purposes we require the Mediterranean for longitudinal use throughout its length, whereas the necessity for France is to use it transversely at its western end for comparatively short sea journeys about four hundred miles long.

It is the boast of every good Italian that the Mediterranean Sea shall again, after the lapse of centuries, become a Roman Lake, and there is no disputing the fact that Italy's central situation, coupled with her resurgence as a military Power in the broad, embracing sense, saves that boast from being only bombast. As it is she can be said to bridge it in the middle, largely by reason of her local air power, and the fortifying of Pantellaria is a substantial indication of a key position midway. Considered as a narrow water-way, or as, indeed, a super-grand canal, despite its total area, it is no exaggeration to state that Italy is in a fair way to control the middle lock. And that, in fact, is the state of affairs, for such is the configuration of the coast-line, and such the position of the island furniture within those confines, that the course of ships between Gibraltar and Port Said is constricted and lies, as it were, between opposing banks.

The control of a middle lock on any international waterway is useful, but power over the gate of entrance itself is better and that is how affairs are shaping now.

The wine of victory is strong and heady, especially so for a country, such as Italy, which happens to be staging, under the aegis of dictatorship, a military "come-back." Certainly she drank deeply of the stuff in Abyssinia, conquering there by a marvel of organization, reinforced by air power, an Empire the terrain of which might have baffled her for decades otherwise. Our own South African experience can point the moral of that story. And so the potion which General Franco had been brewing in the early months of 1936, once the taste had been acquired, proved fatally tempting. The possibility, however remote or miscalculated, of a Sovietized Spain in territorial possession of the Western Mediterranean, with Czecho-Slovakia, a communistic stepping-stone, at an equal distance between the proselyte and the instructor, may have been alarming. But it is much more likely, in view of the sentiment *ad maiorem Italiae gloriam*, so often and so vocally pronounced, that the game of interference was thought to be well worth while. The prospect of converting the Mediterranean into an Italian Lake might be hastened and enhanced thereby. The thither, German, end of the axis of rotation could, naturally, not escape the impulse, though, seated on the periphery, the assistance which it brought was largely specialized.

In this connection the part which Portugal may be destined to play will bear examination. Our oldest ally is also a totalitarian State and, as such, tooth-and-nail in opposition to the Government of Spain. The revolt, indeed, was hatched in Lisbon, and in every way possible Portugal has since placed herself in surreptitious fashion at insurgent disposal. The implications of victory for General Franco are, therefore, obvious for how then could this little country, so precariously situated and yet of such enormous strategic value, escape a Fascist domination in her turn? If the small mainland territory of Portugal were thus engulfed it would be significant enough for us. But with the homeland would go her islands, and here exists a possibility which is fraught with dread. For the Azores, Madeira, and the Cape Verde Isles are curiously put down in ocean space, and if adapted for a warlike purpose by sea and air are so situated as to endanger, not alone all shipping which might be home or outward bound *via* the Cape, but every

ther ocean route as well with the exception only of sailings east and west across the North Atlantic. This would be more of German than Italian concern, for the latter country cannot stretch her power to infinity, and must rest content for long to come with a Mediterranean stranglehold. But Germany has energy to spare, and it would be idle to suggest that her clear-thinking strategists have not perceived such a golden opportunity for the encirclement of Britain.

The story is so plain to read, and the deduction so obvious to draw, that the ideological veil which the majority of Britains drew down over their eyes can only be bettered as a method of escape by the tactics of the ostrich. The Government, owing to a woeful lack of preparation, pathetically apparent during the so-called Abyssinian crisis, were of course tied hand and foot and could only proceed to re-arm at break-neck pace. But how the full implication of Italian and German intervention in the affairs of Spain could escape the minds of ordinary right-minded citizens is a sheer amazement, the aim and object being, almost without pretence of purer purpose, the aggrandisement of Italy in the Western Mediterranean, with a special eye to the entrance gate itself.

If the "Nationalist" cause triumphs Italy will be in the enviable position of a first mortgagee of Spain, with a controlling voice in her home and foreign affairs. The treasure which has been outlaid demands the best security, and the interests of the principal creditor will assuredly come first. Spain, and the Western Mediterranean, for long enough if not for always will be under Fascist domination. With a puppet State, situated strategically thus, as Manchukuo is the puppet of Japan, it can easily become directly the tool of an aggressive policy. The Balearic Isles, for instance, either by lease or cession, or according to the secret clauses of a treaty, would become utilizable as submarine and aircraft bases for Italy, and are so situated athwart the sailing path between Algiers and the French southern coast that a serious threat to the safety of the communication line is at once supplied. Similarly, either side of the Straits of Gibraltar would become a "Fascist" foothold with all that such an untoward event would imply, and here indeed to us would be the very head and front of the



offending. For if the passage of our ships-of-war could be successfully disputed in the circumstance of modern war, and the Mediterranean become Italy's *mare clausum*, with only France against her in those waters, then a knell for the passing of the British Empire would begin to toll.

It is not for the layman to speculate on the feasibility, or otherwise, of such a naval undertaking in the face of modern opposition. He may, however, be permitted to remember how lamentable a failure was the forcing of the Dardanelles. There is great dissimilarity, no doubt, between that problem and the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar, the Dardanelles being long and narrow, while the latter have a width of eleven nautical miles and a length of only twenty miles from Cape Tarifa to Europa Point. And yet, in Parliament and elsewhere competent persons have expressed themselves as gravely doubtful on the subject, pointing out that the Rock is not easily defensible on its landward side, that shore batteries could command the stretch of water, and that there would nowadays be locally based aircraft, submarines and motor torpedo-craft to contend with, in addition to the mines and coast defences which held us up on that former occasion. We are told that the prevalence of sea fog can always be relied on to assist the passage, though it is disconcerting, if that be true, that the safety of the Empire should be dependent on a transient condition of climate! There is little doubt, however, that hostile guns on the further side of Algeciras Bay would forbid Gibraltar harbour to our fleet, and that the garrison, in consequence, would be cut off from reinforcement.

There is, however, the Mediterranean Fleet within the Sea to think of in this connection, quite strong enough, if sea-power were alone to count, to mop up the Italian Navy without the help of France. Its disadvantage would be that it cannot keep the seas forever, and that the key positions, Gibraltar and Malta, where normally the ships would harbour for their servicing and supply, would now be in the one case untenable, and in the other excessively unhealthy. There are harbours at the eastern end, well-placed and large enough to shelter all the ships, but roadsteads are very different from Imperial outposts, long in use, where the needs of a fleet have been meticulously catered for as

modern navies grew. Then there is the effect of local air power to consider. The Mediterranean is not an empty waste of water like an ocean, and only at its farthest eastern end is it beyond effective range of Italian aircraft, more particularly should General Franco win the Spanish Civil War. It is mere pretence to claim that the ship-of-war has nothing to fear from the bomber any longer, and it is hard in the extreme to envisage a fleet's complement of aircraft making headway against the metropolitan air force of Italy so near at hand to its sources of all supply, and so extraordinarily well-situated to command the narrower stretches of the Sea. Italy would be the power on the spot, with all her resources by sea and land and air at her immediate command. Her position astride the Mediterranean is one of natural strategic strength. She could sustain herself in spite of any reverse she might encounter in a sea fight, for a thousand bombing aircraft, a swarm of submarines, and numbers of motor torpedo-craft, would reinforce her sea power locally and more than offset the depletion of her strength in capital ships.

On land as well she would be formidable, for our Mediterranean and Near-Eastern garrisons are not large, while the Egyptian army has a peace strength of only 13,000 men. The Libyan corps would undoubtedly march east in an attempt to overcome Egypt and secure the Suez Canal, and the British troops in Palestine, together with the Royal Air Force units at their disposal, could hardly abandon the country to the Arab malcontents, already primed by Italian propaganda, by moving towards the scene of greater conflict. Reinforcements, even if available, must first succeed in passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, after which they would have to run the Mediterranean gauntlet in constant deadly danger of various forms of attack from an enemy with the huge resources, carefully built up to plan, of Italy. Among these the consequences of the fall of Abyssinia must receive due mention, for the Red Sea now is but an extension of the Mediterranean "Canal," with the Suez-Port Said lock a matter of 1,300 miles from the Strait of Bab el Mandeb at its final exit. Very large Italian forces are in occupation of Abyssinia, with immense stores of material and particular strength in aircraft. This imperial garrison is organized as far as possible on a self-supporting basis, for even

military megalomania would not stake its safety on so tenuous a thread as the ability to use the Suez Canal in time of war. As a result Italy possesses formidable power at the entrance to the Red Sea and greatly preponderant to our own in that vicinity. In Yemen, opposite, her political influence is also continually increasing. It might be, indeed, that a future Anzac Corps would find on the inhospitable Abyssinian shore a new "Gallipoli." Then might our power in the Eastern Mediterranean, and beyond, begin to crumble, and then might the territorial bastion which we have erected in those regions to guard the short sea way be undermined and levelled to the ground.

All this, or something very like it, would be a sequel to a victory for General Franco and then all would depend on the ability, or otherwise, of the British Navy to keep open the Straits. If the difficulty of that purely naval undertaking were insuperable, then the Mediterranean would become a closed arena of war, wherein a power which is openly desirous of altering the balance in those waters, and which, in many subtle ways, has evinced a hostile intention, could dispose of forces much large in the aggregate than any we could put against her. It is not a consoling thought.

The following quotation from *Disarmament* by Señor de Madariaga, written in 1927, should, I think, be engraved upon the minds of those who have to determine British policy :—

"England, as a whole, still believes in the supremacy of the British Navy, as the panacea for all her international ills. That it has been a panacea for about three centuries no one can deny. That it played its last scene in this magnificent rôle during the Great War no one can deny. But that it was the last scene is apparent to everyone outside England and to those clear-sighted Englishmen who do not allow the glow of the past to interfere with the light of the present."

Then, perhaps, the case for getting down to brass tacks with Italy—*pace* the cynical comment it must arouse—will be better appreciated.



## “MIGHTY NOBLE EATING”

BY HELEN SIMPSON

THE Restoration gave back to England more than a King ; it restored, among other things, a normal attitude to food. The Puritans could not forget that the Church of Rome called holy-days feasts and celebrated them accordingly. To destroy all trace of the Scarlet Woman's long reign, they permitted themselves a good deal of sermonizing and even some fantastic legislation ; witness that ordinance of 1644 which directed that Christmas Day should be kept as a strict fast ; an opening which the satirists, named and anonymous, could not resist. Thus you have Samuel Butler's account of Protestant stalwarts blaspheming custard through the nose, and another writer grumbling :

“ All plumbs the prophets sons despise,  
Treason's in December pies . . . . .  
When Christmas was an high day  
'Tis turned into Good Friday.”

I cannot call to mind any cookery books proper published under the Commonwealth. The nearest thing is an edition of Dr. Moffet's *Health Improvement*, which deals rather with the medical aspects of eating, and dwells longest on the foods to be avoided at all costs.

But if food was deplored it was eaten ; and if recipes were not published they were noted kown. Housewives were inquisitive about the new foods which every year were coming into England in the course of trade. Vegetables were becoming popular, sugar and spices cheaper. (Pepys was amazed to find himself on an Indian ship walking in cloves and nutmegs above the knees, and treading upon pepper ; as noble a sight as ever he saw in his life). The housewives quietly made their experiments, and set down the results in strongly-bound books, carefully indexed, variously written, of which a good many have survived to this day. With their help, and a reasonable

background of history, it may be entertaining to consider the meals eaten and recorded by Samuel Pepys.

They are not always what they seem; the meanings of certain terms in cookery have changed, and the hierarchy of food, the order in which meat, fish, sweets are served, is by no means the same as that which we recognize. Look at a few of his dinners in detail; first, that which is noted down on January 26th, 1660, as "a very fine dinner, viz., a dish of marrow bones; a leg of mutton; a loin of veal; a dish of fowls, three pullets and a dozen of larks all in one dish; a great tart, a neat's tongue, a dish of anchovies; a dish of prawns and cheese." Meat, in the seventeenth century, always takes pride of place, while fish huddles in with the fruit and cheese as a second course; so it is probable that the bones, mutton, veal, and birds all came on the table together to start with, and were followed by oddments, with a tongue to cut at, if anybody felt that choice of three or four sorts of meat was not enough. A final dish of savoury fish is an old custom, witness the paper found in Falstaff's pocket; "Item, anchovies and sack after supper, 2s. 6d." In his and Pepys' day, as now, their purpose was to stimulate thirst; but while we nibble salt stuff before the meal, they reckoned that the main drinking should come after, and arranged matters accordingly.

Considering the resources of a seventeenth-century kitchen, I should say that this mutton and veal were roasted—that is, turned and basted before an open fire—while the birds on their dish were put into the oven to undergo the process which we call roasting, but which in fact is baking. The marrow bones, their ends sealed with paste, could be cooked in a skillet hung over the open fire. The neat's tongue might be cold; though it figures hot as a rule, and cooks took a good deal of trouble over it.

As for the great tart, there is no clue to its contents, and without that clue we wander in mazes of conjecture. The cooks of this century put their best imaginings into tart form, cutting pastry in patterns, laying great stress on the conjunction of colours, describing the dish as red or black, green or yellow according to its contents, which were not always or necessarily fruit. Bacon tart, for example, is common; so is spinach, sc

is green pea. But Mrs. Pepys would not have been able to offer these latter at a January dinner, and a bacon tart would have provided no light relief. Possibly her French blood dictated that tremendous sweet known as the Great French Tart, which several housewives rather wistfully mention, it being troublesome and not cheap to make ; a pound of blanched almonds beaten up in a mortar with rose-water, the breast of a cold roast turkey similarly pounded with lard, the marrow of four bones, a pound of butter, two of sugar, lemons, citron peel, a whole quarter pound of pistachio nuts and the yolks of eight eggs, all set in pastry.

This dinner of January 26th, 1660, is by no means a subtle one. But, as the years wear on, Pepys, with a little more money to spend, and a growing acquaintance among seafarers, makes experiments in taste ; that musk melon in August, for instance, and the jar of olives presented by Captain Cuttance. The melon, I think, was not served with sugar. It was mostly regarded as a vegetable, and sent round with meat. Evelyn, who understood flavours, says that sugar with melon is a mistake, and a little salt and pepper is all it needs. He uses it as we should use an avocado pear. As for the olives, the seventeenth century like the twentieth shared Gerard's opinion, that “ there is no nourishment at all to be looked for in them, much less good nourishment ”—their oil apart, that is. They did well enough as appetizers.

The reference on September 25th to “ tee, a China drink,” excites many people unduly. They see in it a delicious foreshadowing of modern times—and picture Pepys, cheered but not inebriated, sipping for pleasure. I am afraid he may rather have had some notion that it was good for the tendency to stone from which he suffered. European doctors were loudly preaching its virtues at this moment. The Dutchman Boutekoe (Pepys had been, though for a short time, in Holland) received a considerable pension for his treatise on tea as a solvent of the stone. It would not be the first aliment to start as a duty and end as a treat. Also, though this is hard for a generation to realize that has been brought up on it from the mother's knee, tea is an acquired taste. The chances are that Pepys tossed down his delicately bitter brew with a slight shudder and the



feeling of duty done, just as a few weeks later, he took a draught of chocolate "to settle my stomach." Madame de Sévigné did the same, finding it odd that the doctors should order it for so many purposes, and coming to the conclusion that chocolate must be a food-of-all-work; "*C'est qu'il agit selon l'intention.*"

I am inclined to dwell upon the entry for December 2nd; "My wife and I all alone to a leg of mutton, the sauce of which being made sweet, I was angry at it and ate none." This corresponds to an aversion of my own, some inner voice singing out that:—

The stars in their courses  
Hate sugar in sauces  
Intended for meat—  
Sweets to the sweet.

But Mrs. Pepys was, according to the practice of the time and of other housewives, well within her rights. I give one recipe, out of a dozen available, to show how that leg of mutton might have been done.

"Boile it in water and salt till it is halfe enough then take it up and put it in a greate pewter dish and as much liquor as it was boiled in as will cover it, put to it a little large mace and slices of nutmegge and then take young fennill or parsleye roots, wash and picke them, cut them in pieces and put to the mutton with a quarter of a pound of currans or raisons of the sun, cover it close and let it stew till it is almost ready to take up, then put in two spoonefulls of cappers, sweet butter, two spoonefulls of sugar mingle this well together and when the meate is enough, lay the meate on a dish with sippets, poare on the sawce and let the currans lye on the topp of the meate, let your meate be fatt, it will eate the better."

A variant of this recipe suggests stewing the mutton with prunes, barberries, orange peel and cloves. All things considered, though I see Mrs. Pepys' point of view, my sympathies are with her husband, whose tastes ran ahead of his time.

It is pleasant to see mince pies, that treasonable and Popish dish, back in favour by January 1662, when Sir W. Pen served eighteen of them as omens of good-will and good luck, one for each year he had been married. Our name for that which the crust encloses perpetuates the true tradition of its ingredients, which in practice we no longer observe. "Mincemeat" we call the mixture of fruits and spices; but (except for a little suet) we leave meat out. Not so the seventeenth century housewife. I give a recipe from a manuscript, beautifully written in a hand so like Dorothy Osborne's that sometimes in

dreams I permit myself, against evidence, to think that the book might have been hers.

“Take four pound of Beef, and the like quantity of Suet, with four ounces of Salt, Nutmeg, Pepper, Cloves, and Mace of each one ounce, Currans and Raisins of the Sun of each two pound ; your meate and Suet being chopped very small mingle all together and fill your Pyes.”

Nettle porridge, pease porridge, Suffolk cheese, oysters, venison, cheesecakes, and a brave collar of brawne from Winchcombe ; these are all pure English dishes. Among them, like foreign *attachés* at a Lord Mayor’s dinner, interesting but suspect, go the importations from abroad ; a Spanish oleo ; grapes and melons from Lisbon ; gherkins, the gift of another sea-captain, brought from the Levant ; botargo, made of the roe of mullet or tunny, and something out of the way since in Queen Anne’s day poets were still exclaiming about it ; ortolans, caviare, and beef à la mode. On the fourth anniversary of Pepys’ operation there is a full account of his junketings, in which the combination of courses is fully set out. First came a brace of stewed carps, six roasted chickens and a jowl of salmon hot ; then a tansy, two neats’ tongues and cheese ; the whole dressed by a hired man cook, with the help of the maid Jane.

Now this really is, as the diarist says himself, a pretty dinner. The chickens, cheese, and neats’ tongues call for no special comment. The carps were expensive, and the method of their preparation dramatic ; nearly all the recipes begin : “Take a living carp and knock him on the head.” He was then stuffed with onions and sweet herbs, stewed in his own blood mixed with wine, and served with lemon slices. The jowl of salmon, a dish which has undeservedly gone out of fashion, was cooked in much the same way, stewed with wine and butter in a chafing dish, and garnished with slices of orange. (It is faintly horrid to recollect that mince pies, made as before but with salmon or carp in place of the beef, were liable to be served on Fridays at this period). The recipes for tansy, a dish which might almost be called the characteristic Restoration sweet, I take from a book once kept by Catherine Cotton, Charles Cotton’s daughter. (It is by no means the last word in tansies, which could be made with parsley, feverfew, violets, or the spawn of a pike as well as with their eponymous herb ; but

it is simple and excellent, and works out like a thick, rather limp pancake). A household book of George II.'s day, explaining how to make "an omlet or French dish," says: "beat or mingle all together as you doe a Tansy-Cake." The spinach water's sole function is to colour the substance green.

"Take a pint of cream and as much Spinach as will yeald a pint of juices stamp and strain it and then take twelve eggs and six whites, half a nutmeg and a white lofe grated and as much sugar as will sweeten it put in two or three spoonfulls of sack mingle all together and make it as hard as you would have it in a skillet, you put it into a frying pan and fry it with a little butter and dish it up with limon and strow sugar on it."

Cream and sugar; these are, of course, the foundations of many sweet dishes, and the adornment of most fruits. But nobody who reads Pepys or the cookery books of his time can fail to note and be astonished at the quantity of cream consumed, the relish for cream as a dish by itself, without other trimming than a dash of rose water or sack. People, with naïve greed, went on country expeditions to procure cream; they mixed it with their drink; they stewed capons and hares in it; they blended it with every fruit under the English sun. It was a spring and summer luxury. You do not find it, or any of its derivatives, given in the winter bills of fare, and no doubt some of the gusto with which it was enjoyed attached to the season which brought it within reach. Some of the dishes in which fresh milk and cream were chief ingredients are nowadays by force of circumstance forbidden to Londoners. A syllabub was not out of the question even a century ago, when cows still grazed in St. James's Park; but nowadays there is no following such a direction as this.

"Take a pot, and fill it half full of Red-streaked Sider, with good store of sugar and a little Nutmeg, only milk the Cow into your Sider, Nutmeg Sugar, and so drink it warm."

Pepys' drinks are as varied as his food. You find him drinking beer, Northdown ale, sack, Canary and Málaga wines, tent wine, brandy and claret; trying my Lady Carteret's coffee, and some metheglin at the King's table; taking milk for heartburn, and horse-radish ale for the stone; being cheated of a sack-posset; tasting burnt wine at a tavern, whey at the whey-house, and lamb's wool at home; vowing to drink no wine, and compounding with his conscience by taking hypocras at Guildhall, it being only "a mixed drink and not any wine"—as who should



say, a cocktail is not alcohol. Some of these mixed drinks might well be revived for present-day parties ; they are easy to make, in spite of the number of ingredients, and less stunning to the stomach than the nightmare blending of liquors evolved by bar-tenders. I do not suggest that metheglin is the sort of thing flat-dwellers could undertake, but anyone might brew lamb's wool, for which Herrick's recipe is still the best :

Next crowne the bowle full  
With gentle Lamb's wooll,  
Add sugar, nutmeg, and ginger.  
With store of ale too  
And thus must ye doe  
To make the Wassaile a swinger.

Put into prose this means : roast half a dozen apples, mix the pulp with sugar and spices, add to it a quart of strong ale made hot, stir, and consume.

A sack posset works out as a kind of wine custard, almost too thick to drink ; the Dutch liqueur called Advocaat is probably the nearest thing to it that we have. It was popular ; every housewife had a recipe for it, and these recipes vary little, except in the suggestions for making the drink present a good appearance. Says one lady, after preparing her sack and sugar : “pour the cream into it, elevating your hand to make it froth, which is the grace of your posset.” Another strews it with ambergris or musk. Another, more frugal (or perhaps making a winter drink) uses the beaten whites of eggs to simulate cream. The more careful ones strain the liquor through a colander ; “this is held the more exquisite way.”

Hippocras takes its name from this necessary process of straining, which was done through a bag of the kind still known to chemists as “Hippocrates' sleeve.” It was a ceremonial drink, handed about on such occasions as weddings and christenings (to an accompaniment of wafers) and made thus :

“Take a quart of sacke, and as much white wine and put into them grossely beaten half an ounce of Nutmegs as much sinnamon as much coriander-seed, and two races of ginger sliced and halfe a pound of sugar, shackle it all well together, and soe lett it stand a daye or two cloase stoped, and shackle it 2 or 3 times a daye. when it is steeped enough couller it with milke and soe lett it run through your jellye bagge, twice or thrice, season it with musk, amber, lemons juice and rind, and oringe flower water.”

It is not surprising that this should have been a drink dedicated to feast days.

Pepys' interest in his food never languishes throughout his diary. He makes more money, in all honesty too—"good God! to see what a man might do, were I a knave." But he still notes delicacies such as asparagus and cheesecakes when he finds them, still records his anniversary dinners in detail as they rise from prettiness to nobility; and in the shadow of a sideboard loaded with plate at the Navy Office gratefully eats the traditional Christmas dinner of turkey and mince pie. His is the completest record of an ordinary seventeenth-century citizen's dietary that we possess, for though the household manuscripts which survive are useful, they sometimes cater for the eye rather than the stomach, are wish-fulfilments, not statements of fact. Pepys eating cold meat on washing-day, touches the imagination more nearly than these, with their pigs soused to imitate sturgeon, and their drinking cups made of pastry royal.

I shall set to work to cook and serve one of his dinners some day; the twenty-sixth of March would be the date most appropriate. But if I do, somebody else must knock the living carp on the head, and there will be no hippocras.

## INSIDE SPAIN

BY HENRY BUCKLEY

THE Spanish Government's success at Teruel may introduce fresh complications internationally. Italy and Germany were willing to reduce somewhat their commitments with the Spanish Insurgents, largely, one suspects, because they felt that with the fall of the North the war was more or less over and that General Franco would merely have to deliver a smashing *coup de grâce* on the centre front in order to complete Government demoralization.

This simplified version of the Spanish situation now becomes untenable. Government Spain is revealed as having an Army capable of carrying out a difficult military operation with verve and success and of resistance to a fierce counter-attack launched on what the Insurgent radio stations described as "world war scale." Not only is the end of the war not in sight but the possibility of further vigorous attacks by the Government suggests that General Franco may not have the opportunity to prepare any really large-scale offensive which might develop into a decisive battle. Will the nations which have aided General Franco to the present stand by with folded arms if his defeat should appear likely? The Spanish problem which had rather drifted into the background as an international issue may give European statesmen sleepless nights in the next few months.

Military operations are so much more spectacular and interesting than political manoeuvres that the shifting political scenes behind the lines in Spain have not perhaps received as much attention as they warrant. When 1937 dawned Señor Largo Caballero was still the most prominent figure in Spain and hailed as the head of the "Government of Victory." Millions of people would have bitterly resented any suggestion that he was incapable. Yet in the first week of 1938 we see him a



lonely figure in his Valencia home abandoned by all except a faithful few and excluded completely from the *entente* within the General Union of Workers which emerged from the gathering held in Valencia on January 3, after the expenditure of much Gallic eloquence by a Socialist visitor from across the Pyrenees, M. Léon Jouhaux.

The decline and fall from power of Sr. Largo Caballero is a sad and depressing story from the personal point of view; politically it is of immense importance.

It was in the early nineties that Francisco Largo Caballero, plasterer in the summer months and road-worker in winter, became a trade unionist. He learned to write when twenty-three or twenty-four. A stolid, sober hard-working Castilian with blue eyes and generally "Aryan" in appearance, doubtless a legacy of Visigoth blood, he became a trade union secretary. Along with Pablo Iglesias and another colleague he was elected to Madrid Municipal Council in 1905. It was a great event for Spanish Socialists. They had never before achieved a seat on a municipal council in Madrid, or in fact anywhere except on one occasion in Bilbao. They only achieved this by stooping to the methods used by the Monarchist parties. Elections were controlled by the use of voting papers which bore identification marks on the back so that the polling-booth officers of the Liberal and Conservative parties who alternated in power in the State and in municipalities could control votes. In the event of unwished for candidates such as Republicans or Socialists piling up votes in any dangerous numbers sufficient faked votes were inserted to even up things. The Socialists imitated the identification mark in several wards and were thus able to catch the Monarchist "interventors" unawares. They assumed that the urns were filling with votes of their own, and when the scrutiny came it was too late to manufacture returns.

I mention this to illustrate the kind of struggle Socialists such as Pablo Iglesias and Largo Caballero were up against in Monarchist Spain. Iglesias was returned to Parliament in 1911, following the Ferrer shooting; but Caballero was not elected until 1917, after he had been condemned to death and reprieved for his part in the 1917 revolutionary general strike.

Iglesias was an old and sick man, and by 1917 Caballero was

the undisputed leader of Spanish Socialism and of the trade unions. In 1921 after some months of dispute and uncertainty, and following the report of Don Fernando de los Rios who returned from Soviet Russia with a magnificent fur coat but an adverse opinion of Communism, Caballero and most of the Socialists decided to join the re-formed Second International and to have no connection with the Third International. Under Caballero the Socialists steered a cautious course during the dictatorship of General Primo. Caballero himself agreed to serve on the Council of State, which played quite an important rôle in social questions; but he stipulated that he should not have to make the traditional courtesy call on King Alfonso following the appointment to this post of honour. The fact that Don Alfonso never had direct or indirect contact with such interesting and influential Left politicians as Caballero, Araquistain, Pestaña, del Vayo, and Azaña did much harm to the Monarchy. It is not very clear whether Don Alfonso's advisers should be blamed—or whether the monarch himself was refractory to seeking personal knowledge of these men who reflected important sectors of opinion in the country.

As Minister of Labour under the Republic, Caballero took a moderate line. Almost immediately he had to face the strike of telephone workers provoked by the Anarcho-Syndicalists and his resolute attitude resulted in the defeat of the strikers and the dismissal from their employment of most of the men who took a prominent part. He said afterwards that at this juncture he recommended the formation of Republican militia forces to defend the régime, but that he found no support in the Cabinet.

The overthrow of the Left and the new phase of the Republic when it came under the control of Señores Lerroux and Gil Robles, was reflected in the adoption of a violent attitude by Caballero, who led the opposition to this move to the Right and who sponsored and led the revolutionary general strike of October, 1934. Before and after the elections of 1936 Caballero was refractory to collaboration with the Republicans. Indalecio Prieto had to work very hard to bring about the Popular Front and after the elections he was unable to persuade Caballero and the other Socialist leaders to join the Government. Caballero approved of the formation of the armed Socialist militia during

the spring of 1936, which battled with the armed groups of the Fascist organizations who were carrying on terrorist activities and who proved of valuable and probably decisive importance in checking the movement during the first days in Madrid. But Caballero was, and is, a single-track mind. The dominance of the Socialists seems to loom out of proportion in his viewpoint. I remember in June, 1936, being told by Señor Araquistain that he and Sr. Largo Caballero did not approve of the union just carried out of the Socialist and Communist militias who had formed the United Socialist Youth organization. The union had been sponsored by Alvarez del Vayo who had just returned from a visit to Moscow, and Araquistain said quite openly that both he and Caballero did not approve of even indirect influence emanating from Moscow. Caballero, who is now sixty-nine, will not tolerate anything that impinges on the dominant position of his party, thus we see that while in February, 1936, he strongly mistrusted the Republicans, by June he was already beginning to fear that the real danger to socialist hegemony lay from the Communist quarter.

In September, 1936, six weeks after the insurgent movement started, Caballero became head of the Government, and his personal popularity and political strength was enormous. Military reverses followed swiftly. Toledo was forgotten and the hasty departure from Madrid to Valencia, which, from a strategical point of view, should really have been carried out earlier, was overlooked in the glow of triumph following Madrid's vigorous resistance. But Málaga rankled. There were so many things to be explained away, and even the parrying of the fierce attack at Arganda and the successful counter-attack and defeat of the Italian expeditionary force at Guadalajara did not quiet resentment.

There had been much surprise at the naming of General Asensio as Under-Secretary of War and as the director of military operations, following on Toledo. Not that the untrained and unequipped Government militias could have saved Toledo against the well-disciplined and well-equipped Franco troops, but no defences had been prepared at all, and even with defeat obvious and imminent not even such elementary precautions were taken as to evacuate the hospitals. Hundreds



of wounded and doctors and nurses were left to be slaughtered by Moors and Foreign Legionaries in one of the nastier episodes of a singularly nasty war. His appointment following Toledo as Under-Secretary of War caused much lifting of eye-brows. After Málaga violent and outspoken criticism was heard on all sides. The more moderate said Asensio was stupid; the more violent condemned him outright as a traitor. Caballero defended him at stormy Cabinet meetings. A Communist Minister asked for his resignation on the grounds that he had been seen in a cabaret in Valencia at five o'clock in the morning in a state of mild intoxication. Finally Caballero got rid of him and made another singularly bad choice by putting into his place Carlos de Baraibar, a Madrid journalist of limited capacity and with numerous enemies in the Left camp who insisted that his conversion from views of a violent right-wing character was much too recent—some seven or eight years before—to inspire confidence.

I saw a good deal of Asensio about the time of Toledo, and he struck me as a brave and intelligent officer and probably quite loyal to the Government. But he was definitely an officer of the old school. He did not understand the handling of a citizen army, and I think he had little faith in his men. He planned elaborate tactics which untrained troops could not possibly carry out, where simpler defensive measures would have saved many lives and many disappointments. At any rate Caballero lost popularity to an enormous extent by his dogged defence of this officer, and people began to suspect what many of Caballero's intimate friends had long known, namely that he was a very obstinate old man who looked at every problem from an intensely personal viewpoint.

His final overthrow was not, however, directly due to Asensio. It was the result of the May *putsch* prepared by the Anarchists and Trotskyists in Barcelona. The free hand permitted to these extremists before the rising, and the refusal to take stern measures afterwards, lined up Republicans, Communists and the great majority of the Socialists against Caballero. The Communists as his most vocal opponents led the revolt, but behind the scenes the hand of the plump Señor Prieto ("Don Inda" is the name by which he is generally known) was evident.

He seems to have wished Alvarez del Vayo to take the premiership, at least there is a credible report to that effect. But Vayo seemed to hesitate. Why he should do so is not clear, for he has long been suspect to the Caballero clique as being too close to the Communists. Dr. Negrin, who had done an excellent job at the Finance Ministry, was named Premier, and the Anarchists were left out. The scholarly doctor is *persona grata* to most parties and a born diplomat. Many thought that Señor Prieto intended to govern indirectly through Dr. Negrin, but the latter has a good deal of personality and is well able to look after himself.

After lying low for some time Caballero in the rôle of fallen angel of the Spanish Revolution began to plot. Surrounded by a clique of admirers who told him day in and day out that he must save Spain from Communism which was absorbing the nation in enveloping tentacles he took a bold and singularly inadvised step. As Secretary-General of the General Union of Workers he suddenly surprised the two million odd members of this organization by discovering that more than a dozen trade unions were behind in their payment of their fees to the parent federation and must therefore be expelled. Now it happened that all the unions in question had recently signed a manifesto offering their unconditional support to the Government for the purpose of winning the war. How serious a political blunder this was may be deduced from the fact that one of the unions concerned was that of the Asturian coal miners, most of whose members were at the moment fighting in the terrible and hopeless struggle in the north and who were being glorified daily by the Press of all shades of opinion in Government Spain as heroes and martyrs. This was unadulterated political suicide, and the Government which had been worried as to the possibility of Caballero and his advisers, Araquistain, Baraibar, Rodolfo Llopis, Pascual Tomas, Wenceslao Carrillo, receiving support not only from some of the Socialist workers but also from the anarcho-syndicalists of the National Labour Confederation (C.N.T.), could breathe freely. Caballero was finished as the result of his narrowness of view. Of forty-three unions only some nine remained loyal to him, and finally these returned to the fold after the Valencia meeting under Jouhaux; Pascual

Tomas, Carlos Hernandez, Ricardo Zábalsa and several other trade unionists placed in a conflict of loyalty to the General Union and loyalty to Caballero decided on the former.

Apart from Caballero's personal tragedy there is the wider implication of his experience. It is the fall from popularity of the most typical representative of the "old guard" Socialists who both in their party and in the trade unions take a consistently and strongly anti-communist line. In October of this year I interviewed Señor Araquistain regarding the views of Caballero; he was a man in a position to know exactly those views. He said:

"Both Señor Caballero and those Socialists who agree with him are determined to fight the Comintern just as vigorously as we fight Fascism. We are grateful to the Russian State for what it has done for us during the civil war but we definitely refuse to tolerate in any way that Spain shall come under the influence of the Third International."

I went to a very prominent Socialist and asked what he thought of this statement. His reply was:

"We are quite as determined to defend Spanish independence as is Señor Caballero. But we do not wish to cross the bridge before we reach the river. If any any time the Communist International attempts to interfere in purely Spanish matters we shall resist vigorously. But this is not the case at the present moment. Both we and the whole of the Spanish people who support us are deeply grateful to Russia for the help we have received and which contrasts so strongly to the rebuffs and veiled hostility which we have received from our democratic neighbours. It is quite impossible and impracticable to attempt to distinguish between the Comintern and the Soviet régime."

With the fall of Caballero the way has been smoothed for the union of the Socialist and Communist Parties, which is being pushed very actively by most of the Communists and a lesser, but nevertheless active group of the Socialists. By this union the Socialists hope to obtain sufficient of the strategic positions to impose a moderating influence on the Communist rank and file. The Communists are willing to sacrifice a good deal in order to obtain entry into the party that still dominates the immensely powerful trade union federation, the General Union of Workers, which is prospering and is waxing much stronger than the rival anarchist federation.

So much has been written about the incompatibility of the Spanish character with Communism that many still feel that the Socialists would be committing suicide to unite with them.



But it is a very open question as to whether a nation long dominated by Catholic thought, with its insistence on the acceptance of a rigid dogma, is really likely to be hostile to a political creed evolved on the acceptance of hard-and-fast doctrines. When one surveys today the Communist influence in Spain, with 320,000 members in the party, with a youth organization which claims some 350,000 members, with Pioneers, Friends of the Soviet Union, League of Anti-Fascist women, International Red Help, and other organizations which bring literally hundreds of thousands of Spaniards under the influence of Communist thought, it needs a good deal of imagination to envisage an early collapse or decline. Nor can one overlook the very strong Communist influence in the Army—which seems to grow rather than decline.

The Socialists have suffered from their long training as an opposition party. After the Franco *coup* of July, 1936, when paramount responsibility fell on their shoulders they failed to realize the necessity of complete reorganization and of the building up of a machine capable of leading masses instead of their old purely opposition movement.

To-day they need the Communist organization in order to swing the masses. Their own organization is no use at all for the present task, and their only alternative would be to use the trade unions as direct political bodies. Now this is just what Socialist leaders such as Prieto and Negrin do not want to do. They wish to keep the administrative power in the hands of political bodies. For most of them the amalgamation with the Communists looms as a distasteful probability, but sooner or later either they will have to accept unity or to submit to a trial of strength, and they are much more likely to adopt the former solution.

The Popular Front has come out of 1937 very well. The adjective "popular" still appears to hold good. The radical extremists of Anarchist organizations and the members of the Trotskyist "Poum" Party, who maintain that the revolution is being betrayed and call for violent action against the Government, have lost power and influence. The Spanish masses very definitely want an orderly administration and are tired of vague social experiments. Suppression of the murder of

political opponents and prisoners appears to have become almost complete. I spent more than a fortnight in and around Teruel during the capture and defence of that town. There were a few excesses. One witness told me that he had seen three bodies of civilians who had been summarily shot. I myself saw the body of a man who I was told had been shot "because he was a Carlist." Two tough little *carabineros* told me that they had shot a priest who emerged from a church as they entered the town. But these were the only cases I came across, and considering the fact that over 20,000 soldiers and civilians were taken in the town and its surroundings this would seem to indicate that the Government can justly claim to have established a system of justice and a spirit of discipline which works—even under war conditions.

Lonely and isolated, receiving far less help from outside than is generally believed abroad, Government Spain is, nevertheless, slowly organizing both her civil and military life with a surprising degree of reality. There is better stuff in Spain than most of us suspected, and it is terribly sad that it should need the stress and cruelty of civil war to reveal this.

## THE GERMAN ARMY OFFICER

BY HARUSPEX.

IF the recent internal and external crisis of the *Reichswehr* has done something to drag that most enigmatic factor in German as well as in World politics into the public limelight its work is but half accomplished. Commentaries abroad have through their lack of precise information—both as regards the army's relationship to the party and its inner structure and conflicts—proved singularly unenlightening, indeed in their interpretation of the issues involved contradictory to a remarkable degree.

To understand the present *Reichswehr* both in its internal and external outlook one has to remember, above all, that it is essentially a product of the post-War era and that its much advertised connections with the Old Imperial Army are in reality far slighter than one would imagine in view of the sentimental emphasis laid upon them. As all the High Commanders gained their first and most impressive experiences in the old army it is inevitable that the vast majority of them should be still strongly imbued with its spirit and principles, but this does not alter the fact that, taken as a whole, the spirit and outlook both of the army and of the officers differ most markedly from their predecessors. Institutions like the General Staff—which, by the way, never under the old *régime* exercised the influence ascribed to it—have been established on the old lines and fulfil roughly the same functions, but the men that comprise them are no longer of the same type or character.

The greatest difference in outlook between the pre- and the post-war Army is undoubtedly in its attitude towards politics. The old Imperial Army was definitely unpolitical. It rather despised politics as a contemptible game, with which it had no need to concern itself. Owing its allegiance to the Crown and not to the nation, it was protected by the person of the sovereign



from all immediate contact with the political struggle and could devote itself exclusively to its military duties.

The result of the World War was to turn the army out of this privileged and secluded position. Instead of constituting the spoilt darling of society and the main pillar of the political structure it found itself suddenly cut down to an insignificant fraction and at the same time the object of the deepest suspicion both on the part of the Inter-allied Control Commission and of the Republican parties, a suspicion which it took years to live down and all the ability of such a born diplomatist as General von Seeckt to overcome so far as to secure for the Army the indispensable freedom for its internal consolidation. On the other hand, with the practical disarmament of Germany through the Versailles Treaty making the *Reichswehr* incapable of effectively fulfilling its purpose, the defence of its country, the evasion of these regulations, not unnaturally, appeared in the light of a patriotic duty and led the *Reichswehr* into the series of political adventures culminating in the wholesale organizing and training of entire units within the framework of the Red Army and the secret rearmament achieved before and under the Third Reich. No wonder that the atmosphere of conspiracy created by the necessity of keeping these activities secret, not only from the enemy but from its own politicians as well, produced within the *Reichswehr*, and in particular in the Ministry of War, a most curious and abnormal mentality differing fundamentally from the traditional straightforward, if rather blunt, honesty of the Prussian officer.

Dissimulation assumed the character of a virtue, double-crossing was now a matter of routine, and a skill for political intrigue became a highly valued asset. It was inevitable that moral standards should become blurred and, that fundamental barrier once broken down, the lines between intriguing for the sake of one's country and for one's own or for one's group advancement should become easily confused.

Nor was this the only point in which the disintegrating influences of the Republican era changed the *Reichswehr* officers outlook fundamentally from that of the former army. To keep the politicians from prying too closely into the Army's secrets was not the most arduous task the successive High Command

had to contend with. Far greater was the difficulty of keeping—in that era of intense political turmoil and altercation—the Army and the officers safely out of the political strife. Not that the Army as a body was ever as out-and-out reactionary, monarchist and bellicose, as the politicians of the Left were apt to see and to decry it. On the contrary the experiences of the World War and, above all, of the final bitter collapse had not failed to leave their mark upon the vast majority of the officers and had instilled them with a far wider and above all more modern social outlook and understanding of the relationship between a leader and those to be led by him than had formerly been the case.

Above all, the social character of the officers corps itself had undergone a marked change. The feeble attempts made in the beginning at its “republicanization” had miscarried or were easily shelved. But, curiously enough, the landed gentry and old Prussian officers families failed to retain their hold upon the Army to anything like its former degree. In their stead the middle classes—more emotional in temperament and far more easily swayed by the general currents of public opinion—began more and more to dominate among the younger ranks. The older officers made it a point of honour to maintain the strictly unpartisan and unpolitical attitude demanded of them, but the young bloods, impulsive, hot-headed and violently nationalistic could not be expected to stand aside from the general political struggle, which during those years shook the youth of Germany like a fever. Inexperienced and idealistic, they were inevitably drawn towards the more extreme and intolerant brands of nationalism. Ludendorff’s prestige as a commander attracted many of them, especially amongst the Staff officers, to the political absurdities of his Tannenberg League. The attempt to fuse an extreme nationalism into a no less decided socialism undertaken by a small group of intellectuals around the Socialist Niekisch, and similar trends towards a “National-Bolshevism,” found a remarkable echo not only amongst officers but non-commissioned officers as well. National socialism itself originally excited less interest. Yet it was the famous trial of three officers for entering into illicit communications with that party, held at Leipzig in 1930, which for the first time revealed to the general public to what degree the political strife had penetrated

into the ranks of the *Reichswehr* and the depth of dissension which it had aroused there, not only between elder and younger officers, but between the various warring groups of the latter. It was symbolical of the whole situation that of the three officers accused, one disappeared altogether from the political stage, the second after his release received a high position in the S.A., while the third went over to the anti-Nazi National Bolsheviks. Desperate efforts made by the High Command to reaffirm the unpolitical and non-partisan character of the *Reichswehr* succeeded during the following years in restoring its outward unity to a considerable extent, but the precarious cohesion thus re-established was strained to the breaking-point, when General von Schleicher found himself compelled personally to assume the position of Chancellor and thereby to drag the *Reichswehr* itself into the midst of the political conflict.

Thus the "National" Revolution of 1933 found the *Reichswehr* already in a state of scarcely concealed inner tension, which the following years were destined to increase to a remarkable degree. Thanks to the practical autonomy enjoyed by them, the fighting services did succeed in escaping the worst effects of the universal "politization" brought about in every other sphere of public life in Germany by the new *régime*. But even they could not in the long run keep themselves immune, could not escape the influences emanating from the rapid disintegration of every standard of private and public morality surrounding them. The Nazis, as everyone knows, lay great emphasis upon *Weltanschauung*. But this, instead of reintegrating these divergent influences within the Forces by the tendency to set political reliability above service and its encouragement of every form of spying and political sycophantism served only to accentuate these dissensions further and to destroy irrevocably the considerable degree of professional, if not of political, solidarity hitherto maintained within the ranks of the officers corps. Instead of continuing to form one great community, the members of which, beneath all outer divergencies, were proudly conscious of their fundamental unity, the officers corps broke up into innumerable small cliques and coteries, each viewing all others with the deepest suspicion and rivalry. Dissimulation and mutual distrust of the other fellows' private and political outlook and



reliability took the place of the former frank and open comradeship, while the advantages gained by those that put themselves wholeheartedly at the disposition of the new *régime* tended still further to foster that unhealthy spirit of competition and intrigue so utterly incompatible with the moral integrity and inner cohesion of any armed force. The result of this internal disruption brought about by the Nazis in the service has been to break down within these few years effectively the Army's fundamental strength, its power for concerted action, and thus made it innocuous from the party's point of view, but at the cost of reducing its fighting value to a degree extremely difficult to assess.

Amongst the various groups to be discerned to-day within the ranks of the officers corps the adherent of the old traditions of the Prussian Army are, above all, to be found among the higher ranks, the majority of whom naturally still cling to the professional and political tenets of their youth. In their political outlook they are conservative, although not necessarily monarchist. They have accepted the Nazi Government as the liberator from the fetters of Versailles. But intimate contact and frequent conflicts with its representatives has robbed them of any illusions they might still have entertained as to the moral qualities of its leaders or of the *régime* as a whole, which most of them continue to serve only because there is nothing else left and with constant self-abnegation. They have tried to maintain, as far as possible, the non-political character of the army even under the new *régime*, and to that end have restricted party propaganda to the utmost degree compatible with avoiding open opposition. They are, above all, most of them, definitely and profoundly Christian in their outlook, in that deep, unostentatious way characteristic of the old army and they have succeeded in maintaining the army the only public body in Germany with a positively Christian basis of thought.

Unhappily their very qualities, in the situation they were placed in, have proved their undoing when dealing with the representatives of the party. Balanced and objective in their outlook and animated by a genuine feeling of responsibility for the country, but unhappily without any political will of their own, they have been hopelessly outmatched in their conflicts

with the Nazi leaders, no less by their lack of a positive purpose than by that of the barefaced unscrupulousness and dare-devil determination which they found themselves up against. Time and again, in the early days of the new *régime*, they missed them opportunities of overthrowing it by a bold stroke; time and again they let the chance slip out of their grasp, for fear of the political radicalization of the country if the *coup* should fail—and, above all for the lack of a political conception of their own—until the strength of the party had grown, and its grip upon the army tightened to such an extent that an open revolt could only be envisaged as a desperate gamble.

For the greatest weakness of this group lies in the fact that it is almost wholly confined to the older officers, but has few, if any, adherents amongst the junior ranks, politically either indifferent or radical in their views. Thus, although it has been able hitherto to emphasize its demands by presenting the government with a united front of practically all the High Commanders, it has, on the other hand, been more and more fatally handicapped by the uncertainty, as to the support it would be able to count upon in an out-and-out struggle on the part of the mass of the middle and lower ranks—not to speak of the bulk of the rank-and-file.

This fundamental weakness of the conservative elements in the army has inevitably increased through the large-scale expansion both of the army itself and of its officers' corps, during the last years. Nor has the re-enlistment of suitable officers of the Old Imperial Army, served to offset this to any considerable degree; as has been erroneously supposed. For, apart from the fact that even the youngest of these re-enlisted officers of the former Imperial Army are to-day nearing the forties, only a small percentage of them have actually proved fit to be retained permanently in active service; the majority of them have been either placed on the reserve or later transferred to the new group of E-officers, i.e., those unfit for active service and destined to relieve the officers capable of being used in the field from all the bureaucratic routine work unavoidable in a modern army. Thus they form a group of second-rate officers with limited opportunities for promotion and consequently but restricted moral influence and, what is even more

to the point in this connection, they wield practically no executive power with the Services.

Opposing these conservative elements as individuals rather than collectively stands a second group, at least equal in numbers, and individually far stronger both owing to their own activity and the party backing they enjoy: the opportunists and adventurers. Men of the *Landsknechts* type, of strong brutal instincts, who see in the general upheaval of all traditional standards and values brought about by the Nazis nothing but the heaven-sent opportunity for the gratification of their private lust for power and their personal promotion and enhancement. Ready to make their way by any intrigue or deception conceivable, these men, to be found in all ranks of the Services up to the very highest, find the atmosphere created by the *régime* a most congenial medium for the development of their talents in that direction and feel no compunction in paying lip-service to the shibboleths of the Party. Cynical and self-seeking they are in no way troubled by their insight into the moral depravity of the party and its consequences; on the contrary, their fundamental similarity of character—or rather lack of it—attracts them no less to the Nazi leaders than the positive benefits to be derived from such a connection. On the other hand, they would be the first to betray them if their influence showed ever signs of breaking down.

The mass of the Party's adherents, in particular amongst the younger officers, on the other hand, are honest idealists. Their ideas may be immature and fantastic; they are frequently proud of having dispensed with all religious "mythologies" and tend to make a positive virtue out of their purely secular outlook. But their cult of heroism and idealism is at least genuine and unselfish. As far as the realities of the Nazi *régime* have disappointed the high hopes they had set upon it, they have responded by a further radicalization towards a more genuine socialism or national-bolshevism. Thus these young officers as far as they are politically interested at all, have to a large extent taken over within the party the rôle of the S.A. prior to June, 1934. The result is that although ready to back the party against the "reactionaries" their movement contains revolutionary tendencies which might in the end prove scarcely



less embarrassing and dangerous to the *régime* than the more sober and cautious opposition of the "old men."

The majority of the officers, however, belong to neither of these contending groups. Torn between the reverence officially paid to the Nazi *régime* in the Services and its practical effects, as they cannot help noticing them at every turn, they prefer to avoid taking a decision of their own by withdrawing upon their professional duties, seeking to find in their conscientious and efficient fulfilment a definite if limited purpose for their life and efforts. Overwhelmed by the immense increase of work brought about by the expansion of the forces, their only wish is to be allowed to concentrate all their forces upon their immediate objectives and to be spared any disturbances in the form of political or *weltanschauliche* propaganda. Completely taken up by the task of developing and consolidating the defences of their country they naturally tend to deprecate any dissensions between their leaders and the Government as not only liable to force them into taking sides against their wish, but to shake and even possibly to destroy the object of their interest and efforts. Opposed, therefore, to any "politicization" of the forces, they are, on the other hand, not sufficiently determined to make any effective stand against it.

Nowhere has the clash between the Nazis and the Services and between the various sections within the officers cut so deep as in the sphere of religion. For the fact that the leaders of the Army have hitherto succeeded in maintaining its Christian basis and traditions does not imply that the officers as a body or even the bulk of them are any longer to be accounted as Christians or even care to consider themselves as such. Instead of the deep, if rough and primitive devotion of the older generation the mass of the younger officers professes either the slick and non-committal Christianity of the Nazis or openly shows a spirit of complete cynicism. Much of this, apart from the general atmosphere of the Third Reich, is due to the disastrous influence of General Ludendorff.

Such in its broadest outlines is the deeper background of the present crisis, precipitated though not brought about by the generals' protest against Marshal von Blomberg's *mésalliance*.

Externally the end will be doubtless the complete liquidation of the semi-independent position still enjoyed by the Fighting Services. Three or even two years ago the inner cohesion and external strength of the *Reichswehr* would certainly have been sufficient for the overthrow of the *régime*; now any signs of dissatisfaction will in all probability only serve to put the Nazi leaders even more upon their guard and to spur them to tighten their hold upon the Services.

In these circumstances the practical consequences of the responsibility which the Party claims to have assumed for the politics and the morals of the army are ominous enough. Will the party insist upon abolishing the Christian character of the Forces or at least censure its chaplains, as one of its most ardent supporters amongst the High Commanders had, ineffectively, tried to do? Will it introduce political supervision from without in the form of political instructions delegated by it into the army, or will it be content with establishing within the officers' corps that elaborate system of observation and denunciation, of spying and counterspying, which in the Third Reich honeycombs every public and party organization? Will it insist upon recruiting the officers in future exclusively from its own ranks, as it has recently done in the case of civil servants?

Will it follow the example of its axis-partner in introducing its national-socialist salute into the Services instead of their traditional ceremonial. One fact alone is certain, that the Party will spare no effort to convert the initial victory won over its only serious internal rival into as complete a hold as is humanly—or inhumanly—conceivable. That the open opponents of the *régime* will be more or less bloodily weeded out on this occasion and the grip of the Party upon the machinery increase at least externally, is certain. But it is well within the realms of possibility that the very intensity of the pressure applied to eliminate and suppress any opposition or divergence from the official creed may serve to bring groups into the line of opposition that would hitherto not have thought of doing so, not only amongst the younger officers, but above all amongst the bulk of mere "soldiers."

## M. VAN ZEELAND'S REPORT

BY J. B. CONDLIFFE

AS might have been expected, the Van Zeeland Report, presented on the 26th January, 1938, after an enquiry lasting nearly ten months, is a very ably written document. Though brief, it touches upon all the manifold aspects of present trade restrictions and provides a vivid picture of their interwoven complexity. It is conceived in three parts. The first deals very briefly with the preliminary question: Is it a useful thing to develop international trade? M. van Zeeland comes quickly to the conclusion that, although autarchy is theoretically attainable in certain countries, its attainment involves a lowering of the standard of life of the population, and that, although the absolute importance of the international market may have been exaggerated in certain cases, "its relative importance appears to-day to be as great as ever, and its marginal influence is real and powerful."

This belief, he is able to state categorically, is shared practically unanimously by all statesmen of the present day. Indeed one may go further and draw attention to the unanimity of opinion on this broad question of principle, which is apparent not only among the statesmen, but among business leaders as shown in the Berlin Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce, and among monetary authorities, as illustrated by the recent speeches of the chairmen of the leading British banks, as well as among the official experts who constitute the membership of the League's Economic Committee. There must, however, be real and strong reasons why this unanimous desire to increase international trade cannot be translated into action. M. van Zeeland himself "could not but note that when once the first and eminently favourable stage had been passed, the attitude almost everywhere, became qualified by a very marked reserve."



Here, surely, is a case for further enquiry. What is it that makes the practically universal desire for increased international economic co-operation unattainable in practice. There must be substantial reasons for the hesitation of statesmen to do in fact what they approve in theory. The last few years have abounded in plans and initiatives for the freeing of international trade. The Economic Committee of the League discusses little else, official and unofficial suggestions are made frequently and there have even been attempts at practical beginnings, such as the Ouchy and Oslo Conventions; but very little progress is made. It is not sufficient to retort that economic co-operation must be preceded by political settlement. The counter-retort that the way to peace lies through economic appeasement is too obvious. There are in fact considerable economic difficulties to be faced before there can be much real hope of reconstructing an international monetary standard and a freer international trading system. The fact must be recognized that most of the practical suggestions so far made deal only with symptoms and shirk the underlying difficulties. International trade is a potent means of levelling out price discrepancies; but these discrepancies are now very great between national markets. It is an equally potent means of assuring territorial specialization; but national industry and agriculture has been fostered along lines that would be disrupted if trade were freer. The extraordinarily effective new methods of protection have been imposed precisely because tariffs were unable to protect domestic interests against external competition from areas of more efficient production. The importance now attached to *employment* as distinct from production or prices must be reckoned with, and a rearrangement of external debt burdens must be faced.

The second part of M. van Zeeland's report is an interesting and lucid exposition of the principal direct obstacles in the way of international trade and of the means for reducing them. Necessarily his exposition follows lines already very familiar to students of international economic problems. Without entering into the more fundamental issues referred to above, he concentrates on tariffs, indirect protection and quotas as the most important economic barriers to trade and upon exchange

instability, hindrances to capital movements and restrictions on payments as the most important financial difficulties.

Though the diagnosis of these difficult questions is attempted in ten pages it is very lucid and gives a vivid picture of the complex restrictions with which trade is now surrounded. M. van Zeeland recognizes very clearly the practical difficulties of any attack upon these inter-related problems. Indeed there is almost an over-emphasis of these difficulties and too much concession to national and administrative points of view. Apart from this over-caution there is little to quarrel with in the diagnosis. M. van Zeeland puts his finger unerringly on the main obstacles to international trade. These obstacles are now common knowledge, but the processes of popular education are slow, and the periodic restatement of what has now come to be expert agreement is very necessary.

Dealing first with tariffs, M. van Zeeland re-states the case, not against moderate duties which have been in existence long enough for their effects to have been absorbed into the production and price systems of the countries concerned ; but against excessive and arbitrary tariff protectionism. He might well have added a sentence or two to his condemnation of excessive duties, drawing attention to the disturbing effects of frequent tariff revision as he does to the administrative complications that arise from " exaggerating the detail of tariffs and elaborating specification to such a point that the regulations so drawn up are in fact aimed against some individual producer, while deceptively retaining the appearance of general regulations." These are far from being the only abuses of administrative procedure, and the report quite rightly draws attention to the need for stopping the abuse of sanitary regulations and the complication of other administrative formalities.

Most interest attaches, however, to the practical proposals of the Report. These are modest and hedged about with reservations. M. van Zeeland proposes in the first place a series of parallel declarations by Governments undertaking " not to raise or widen the range of their tariffs and to carry out a gradual reduction of such duties as are of an exceptional character and the amount of which is notably greater than the average incidence of the tariff." Even this modest action is to be

spread over a certain number of years. More hope, however, appears to be placed upon the negotiation of bilateral commercial agreements, accompanied by a modification of the most-favoured-nation clause in certain cases. Certain practical suggestions are made for the mitigation of indirect means of protection. It is recommended that industrial quotas should be suppressed. This is perhaps the boldest recommendation of the Report; but it is tempered by the suggestion that such suppression could take place over a series of years and that "tariff quotas" by which imports above a certain minimum are penalized by heavy duties might be utilized in the meantime. Further exceptions are made in favour of quotas against dumping especially from countries with low living standards, and for certain quotas necessary to implement the working of "such international cartels as conform to the general interest." These exceptions open a fairly wide door, and when the much vaguer and less direct proposals that are made for agricultural quotas are taken into consideration it is evident that not a great deal of action is thought practical in this field.

Both in the strictly economic field and in the financial suggestions discussed below, the somewhat extreme caution shown by the authors of the Report raises a very nice question. They have evidently been anxious to put forward plans that offer some prospect of being taken up and translated into effective action. This is shown by the care taken to state practical difficulties and to allow for exceptions and for time before their mild suggestions can be fully carried out. This raises the tactical question as to how far one should go with such concessions to political and administrative expediency. Is it wise, after all, to deceive ourselves as to the difficulties that must be faced? Would it not be wiser to state bluntly what ought to be done and allow the interests concerned to whittle away the proposals? Is there really much more hope of practical action from proposals that are so hedged about with exceptions or will these exceptions provide an excuse, if excuse is needed, for further delay and possibly for inaction?

In the monetary sphere attention is rightly concentrated upon the problems of exchange control—the difficulties now placed in the way of securing payment for exports and the means of



payment for imports. These difficulties are more immediate and of greater practical importance, at least in the short run, than the restrictions placed in the way of foreign investments and, from a trading point of view, outweigh the problems raised by exchange uncertainties and the resulting spasmodic movements of short-term capital ("hot money"). Ultimately, of course, there is no alternative, if international economic co-operation is really desired, to the re-establishment of an international monetary standard—which probably means in practice a reorganized and improved gold standard with fixed exchange rates. Upon this firm basis it would be possible again to count upon a modest but expanding volume of international investment and a growing international trade. The leading currency systems now have the means with which to meet sudden movements of "hot money." Their gold reserves are very great, and substantial proportions of these reserves have been kept aside as Equalization Funds expressly designed to meet sudden capital movements and in doing so to avoid sharp exchange fluctuations.

The smooth working of an international monetary standard, however, pre-supposes economic conditions that do not exist at the present time, notably an assurance of reasonable international economic equilibrium. It would be a grave error, indeed a disaster, if the gold standard were to be restored by unilateral action (as in the immediate post-war period) or even by multilateral agreement (as was attempted at the time of the Monetary and Economic Conference in 1933) and should again break down because of the strains to which it was subjected.

It is probable, therefore, that informed opinion will agree with M. van Zeeland that "the final and definitive solution of the (international monetary) problem must be placed not at the beginning but at the end of the effort of international co-operation towards which we are aiming." Meantime, however, an interim step is suggested by the Report—a revision and extension of the tripartite agreement of September, 1936. What is now required is an assurance that exchange stability will be maintained over as wide an area as possible. This, as M. van Zeeland points out, is easier now that the depreciation to which the main trading currencies have been subjected gives

the possibility of internal and external price equilibrium. But his warning of the necessity for a real will to maintain monetary equilibrium, by appropriate internal and external policies, should be underlined.

The point of immediate attack upon monetary trade restrictions, is quite clearly exchange control. If other countries could follow the example of Austria and first mitigate and then abandon the practice of exchange control, then clearing systems, blocked accounts and other impediments to trade might be dealt with. M. van Zeeland emphatically suggests the necessity of abandoning exchange control, at any rate as regards commercial transactions. Certain measures of control might be retained over capital movements; but "the first and most urgent step is to bring about the suppression of all restrictions on payments for merchandise."

In order to bring about such a reform, however, whether immediately, or in stages, two major problems must be tackled, a settlement of past arrears of debt, particularly commercial short-term obligations, and measures to ease the difficulties of the transition period. Practical suggestions are made whereby the Bank for International Settlements might help in the latter respect.

Such suggestions as these, however, are not new. There is, in fact, no insuperable technical difficulty in restoring a much greater freedom of commercial payments. The real question is the will of the monetary, and above all the political authorities, in the countries most concerned to agree to the necessary measures of international co-operation. The crux of the problem, therefore, lies in the questions M. van Zeeland deals with in the third part of his report.

As the reception of the report shows, the difficulties of initiating any positive action are very great. Governments will express appreciation of its suggestions and will undertake to take further "soundings;" but it is not easy to get them to do anything. There is a notable deterioration in recent years of anything approaching international responsibility. The first semi-official statement made, prior indeed to the publication of the report, came from Italy and was at least sceptical, if not hostile, in regard to proposals for international collaboration.

It is indeed difficult to envisage dictatorial Governments relinquishing the powerful disciplinary weapon which exchange control puts in their hands. The statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, also, while more appreciative of the Report, was accompanied by a defence of tariffs (British model) on the ground that they are invaluable counters which may be used to protect British interests in commercial bargaining with other countries. Quotas are defended, for instance in Switzerland, on exactly the same grounds. Government policies, in other words, are largely influenced by regard not for general prosperity but for particular interests. This is precisely what Adam Smith described as "that baleful spirit of commerce that would govern a great empire by the maxims of the counter." Neo-mercantilism is in the ascendant, however, and its spirit is fostered by the political insecurity of the present time. What can be done in this situation?

M. van Zeeland's suggestion is that five great trading powers France, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Germany and Italy, should be approached to ascertain if they would be willing to attempt closer international collaboration along the lines of his report and if so how far they would go. If the preliminary answer was encouraging, he suggests the creation of a "bureau appointed for the purpose," to work out a scheme of action. Here is the most novel suggestion of his whole report. It is clear that it is a further retreat from the League in an effort to bring in Italy and Germany. The bureau would be, it is presumed, a body like the secretariat of the Non-Intervention Committee, created for a particular purpose. The ordinary man, rather weary by now of the constant efforts to cajole the dictatorships into co-operation, may well wonder if it is really worth while to invent new mechanisms and make fresh overtures. It is, of course, highly desirable on political as well as economic grounds to restore the fullest degree of international understanding and co-operation that can be obtained; but must we wait until a formula can be found and a bait devised to bring in the peoples whose need on any ordinary test is greatest, but whose policies are the most obstructive? Is there any hope that concessions will bring a hearty response, or will they merely be used as an argument for further concessions?



There are some countries whose conception of co-operation seems identical with that of the man who wanted his friend to coo, while he himself operated.

We can only hope that the somewhat disillusioned cynicism of the man in the street will be disappointed and that something will come out of the "further soundings," even though the method proposed is a somewhat gratuitous cold-shouldering of the established machinery at Geneva, which still receives the nominal adherence of three and the unofficial co-operation of a fourth of the six Powers mentioned.

Meantime there appears to be more hope of something being done to liberate international trade if the countries that really wish to do so will negotiate agreements among themselves and leave the reluctant ones to come in when they feel disposed to do so. Perhaps the most practically significant sentence of the whole of this report is that in which M. van Zeeland says that "no one would under-estimate the effect which would be produced—either directly, in its reaction on the two economies concerned, or indirectly in its repercussion on the whole world—by the conclusion, in a spirit of international collaboration, of a commercial agreement covering a wide range, between the two great Anglo-Saxon communities." Here is something we can do and do quickly. If it is done in the spirit of Burke's plea that "great empires and little minds go ill together" it will forge enduring links of friendship and redound to the mutual advantage of the whole English-speaking world. In the world of tomorrow, the United States must play a *rôle* of increasing importance. Already it is responsible for 45 per cent. of the world's manufacturing production. The series of commercial treaties already negotiated have led it far along the road towards accepting, as a creditor nation should, an excess of imports over exports. In years to come the steady vision of its Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, may well be regarded as responsible for a reversion of commercial policy marking a turning-point not only in its own history but in the history of the world. It is surely the path of wisdom to link the British Commonwealth with the growing political influence and increasing economic importance of the United States, and at the same time to support the far-sighted initiative of its present Foreign Minister.

## PUBLICITY BY STEALTH

BY MONTGOMERY BELGION

THE task of making known overseas British culture, the attractions which Great Britain offers to tourists, and British policy in relation to native races and to international affairs in general, is to be under official ægis. The Prime Minister has announced that the Government is appointing a committee to co-ordinate the various forms of British publicity abroad. The most recent of these forms is that of broadcasting. Hitherto Britannia has not ruled the air waves. Indeed, foreign propaganda has had the ether to itself. But a first step has now been taken to counteract this foreign wireless activity. The British Broadcasting Corporation has started a service of broadcasts in Arabic, and services in Spanish and Portuguese are to follow. In connexion with these broadcasts in foreign languages two things, I believe, still remain to be pointed out.

It is idle to deny that an immense quantity of official and semi-official propaganda is now being carried on abroad. Its general effect is to make it impossible for the world at large to ascertain the truth about important happenings. The present struggle in Spain, for example, has been the occasion for a campaign of mendacity of altogether fantastic proportions. Atrocities, casualties, and victories have been freely manufactured on the typewriter. Two matters about which the fog of propaganda has so well shrouded the truth that each continues to be the subject of conjecture are the situation of Majorca and the destruction of the town of Guernica. The Italian Government has firmly repudiated any design of annexing the smallest portion of foreign territory in the Mediterranean. Yet the Barcelona Government and its French sympathizers confidently assert that if the Italians are helping the Spanish Nationalists to hold the island, it can only be as the

result of some secret understanding for the future between the Italian Government and General Franco. Guernica was destroyed during the advance of the Nationalists to Bilbao, and many persons were killed or wounded. The Basques announced that Guernica had been destroyed by the bombs of a large force of aeroplanes operating from a Nationalist base. General Franco's headquarters, however, promptly retorted that the destruction was the work of anarchists fighting with the Basques. Which account is correct the world at large cannot tell.

Yet nothing is easier than to exaggerate the extent of the harm done by propaganda of this kind. Actually, the public nowhere requires to know the exact truth in order to form its opinion. The public is not a jury returning its verdict on the evidence. Ordinary men and women adopt an attitude in a given issue without recourse to conscious reasoning, although it often proves that they have reason on their side. They adopt their attitude by what looks like a kind of instinct. Because we in England are exposed to every wind of propaganda, it does not follow that we do not form definite opinions as readily as do the inhabitants of countries from which alien propaganda is rigorously excluded. When Italy began hostilities against Abyssinia, the Italian nation, which had hitherto viewed the prospect of a war with misgiving, rallied to its Government's support. Without knowing all that might have been urged in favour of the other side, the Italian nation was satisfied that the conquest of Abyssinia had become imperative. Equally without having weighed all the pros and cons, the majority of people here in England refused to believe that Italian policy had in this instance any justice behind it. Signor Mussolini certainly had a case, and his case was accessible to any one who cared to study it; and yet the circumstances in which Sir Samuel Hoare had to relinquish office were to show that we in this country would not even either contemplate the most probable issue of the Abyssinian campaign or recognize the inevitable impotence of the League. We showed ourselves in this matter to be as impervious to propaganda as we were blind to the realities of the situation.

So to-day it need not be doubted that the Japanese can advance impressive reasons for the military over-running of China; but to such reasons the majority of us in England are



indifferent : our sympathies have spontaneously gone to the Chinese. Again, circumstantial as was the account issued by the Spanish Nationalists of how Guernica was destroyed, only those English people already favouring General Franco accepted it. For the persons who follow the British Government in remaining neutral as regards the Spanish struggle just as much as for the persons who actively sympathize with the Barcelona Government, the correctness of the Basques' version has never been in question. More recently the outbreak of unrest among the Arabs in Palestine was accompanied by the publication in the Italian press of a series of allegations of unfair conduct on the part of British officials in that country ; but these allegations, although their publication was reported here, did not lead a single Englishman to espouse the Arab cause.

Thus, the anti-British propaganda which the B.B.C.'s broadcasts in foreign languages are being designed to counteract has in all likelihood very little damaging effect. It avows itself to be propaganda, and it is too invariably tendentious not to be open to the suspicion, even by those who cannot check its statements, that it distorts or even fabricates its news. And all the world over people are sceptical of propaganda which they can recognize as such, and where they think they are in the presence of deliberate distortion or fabrication they are no more than amused.

That is the first thing in connexion with these broadcasts in foreign languages which has not, I think, so far been pointed out. It leads me straight to the second. The B.B.C. has carefully stated that the broadcasts are being confined to news. Great Britain may want to counteract propaganda ; she is not going to engage in *propaganda* herself. The sentiment is admirable. Only, the B.B.C., and the British Government behind the B.B.C., seem to have overlooked that no summary of news can be other than a selection, of news, and that listeners must think it as easy to make the news selected for these foreign broadcasts support and justify British policy in international affairs as it would be to support and justify that policy by means of a commentary. But listeners will also consider that between the two there is this capital difference : that a commentary proclaims itself for what it is, and that a selection of news does

not. It therefore looks very much as if, albeit with the best of motives, the B.B.C.—which goes to such pains, not only in its normal national and regional programmes, but also in its printed publications, not to favour any one side at the expense of an opposite side—were now engaging willy-nilly in *propaganda* under cover of issuing news.

This may easily defeat its own end. A rumour, travelling out of the East, has reached these shores, according to which the Arabs are refusing to listen to the B.B.C.'s broadcasts because they prefer their news coloured. With true Oriental wisdom they prefer propaganda that they can recognize for what it is. But, apart from that, the broadcasts raise the question: can covert propaganda be a good thing?

The broadcasts are addressed abroad, but the question is especially timely for reasons nearer home. It is commonly supposed that, although we here in England are exposed to every kind of contending propaganda from overseas, we are happily free from the effects of a similar local activity. That, like so many other expressions of English insularity, is a delusion. In fact, the British public is being subjected to a mass of propaganda with all kinds of objects and in ways of which it has no inkling. The appointment of a Public Relations Officer to the B.B.C. and of one to the Post Office has been found so satisfactory by the authorities that now a third has been installed at the War Office. These Public Relations Officers are really but agents of propaganda under another name. It is not to be imagined for a moment that they ever issue a statement not in every respect true; but it has, nevertheless, to be recognized that their job severally is to propagate among the public a feeling favourable to the departments for which they work. Propaganda does not depend on the cooking of facts; it is at its most effective when, while sticking to the facts, or to some of the facts, it relies entirely on its manner of presenting them.

Not that home propaganda is always scrupulous about the fact. The issue of the Zinoviev letter on the eve of the general election of 1924 is an event that will not readily be forgotten. That publication was perfectly timed to produce a revulsion of the electorate from the Labour party; and it succeeded. The reason for this success was that the letter was generally accepted

at the time as being authentic. But to what extent it was authentic has since come to light ; and we now see that its issue was simply a piece of covert propaganda. It succeeded simply because it was covert. Had the electorate known all the circumstances in which the publication took place, the reaction might have been different.

All four of our political parties maintain departments of propaganda. British industry, too, has followed since the War the example of industry in the United States, and to-day London Transport, the four great railway companies, such combines as Imperial Chemical Industries, trade federations, and a host of firms, all have their public relations officers and their press departments. For that matter, any person or corporate body with the requisite funds may get propaganda undertaken, provided of course there is no infringement of the law, for whatever object he or it likes. There is no need to maintain a special staff. Experts are now in independent practice, and they will act for a stipulated length of time and on a stipulated scale for a proportionate fee. The result is that the ordinary reader of a daily newspaper or weekly periodical often thinks he is reading news when he is absorbing the work of propaganda. Our press to-day abounds in what can only be called publicity by stealth.

In all this the press, it is true, plays a passive part. We have not yet developed co-operation between the advertising and editorial departments of a newspaper to the point of making it the fine art which it is in France. I remember being told by the night editor of a leading Paris daily newspaper that one of the chief Parisian stores had paid 28,000 francs to have published the short story in the paper that morning. Presumably somewhere in the course of the story there was an adroit reference to the store. In France that sort of thing is going on the whole time. With us, however, propaganda in the press does not yet involve, unless it is frankly in the form of an advertisement, payment to the newspaper or periodical concerned. Yet to-day not only do large advertisers in the principal English newspapers often ask for free puffs in the news columns and invariably obtain them, but also the newspapers and periodicals publish a great quantity of news items and photographs which owe



their existence and publication primarily to the desire of some outside party to propagate the name or qualities of a particular article of consumption or the aims of a particular association or movement. And it is not only news items and photographs that are used in this way, but also feature articles, gossip paragraphs, letters to the editor, and often part of the contents of what are called the women's pages.

No doubt it can be pleaded that those who write all this material or take the photographs do not accept payment from a newspaper or periodical if they are being paid elsewhere. Moreover, the favourite method of propagandists acting for commercial or industrial concerns is to instigate some event the newspaper record of which will be publicity and then to invite the Press to get it reported by men or women of their own staffs. That makes it very difficult to draw the line where legitimate news ends and propaganda begins. If a railway company persuades some personage to name a new engine, and a little ceremony is arranged, the railway company's sole object, of course, is to call the public's attention once more to itself and to impress the public with its enterprise. But many people like to read about new engines, and the event will be "covered" by the newspapers and news agencies in complete independence. They will be free, that is to say, to send or not to send their men to witness the event, as they please; and the "copy" thus provided by reporters will have, as a rule, to run with all the other "copy" that pours into an editorial office in a day its chance of getting into print. Likewise, if a big engineering firm invites the press to the trials of a new air liner, or a Dominion High Commissioner invites the press to the launch of a ship for that Dominion's mercantile marine, it can be argued that if such an event is recorded in the next day's papers, it is only because its "news value," i.e., its supposed capacity to interest the buyers of a newspaper, greatly outweighs any incidental propaganda that may be effected.

The aim, indeed, is to make the public conscious of—to imagine some examples—a railway company, an alcoholic beverage, a night club, a process of avoiding infection with tuberculosis, or a trade union, by causing the public to notice *almost unawares* the railway company's enterprise, the ancient customs observed

in connexion with the beverage, the fashionable people who patronize the night club, a celebrity's support of the process of avoiding infection with tuberculosis, or the trade union's entertainment of a distinguished former member. That is to say, the aim is to put the emphasis on something else and to make the public conscious of a concern, an article of consumption, or a movement, surreptitiously. On that account, however, the propaganda has to be covert, the publicity obtained by stealth. For that matter, the newspapers compel this by being pitiless in excising from "copy" any signs of propaganda they may detect.

The result is that the public is being subjected to a vast amount of insidious suggestion. Advertising, however formidable the objections to its methods, operates openly and without disguise. If people allow themselves to be hypnotized by advertisements, they do so, as it were, with their eyes open. But the propaganda to which I am calling attention does not operate openly, and it is disguised. It works insidiously, by stealth. Possibly every one of the innumerable articles, concerns, movements, and establishments on behalf of which it seeks to influence and shape public opinion is excellent, and the public can only benefit by being subjected to such a quantity of publicity concerning them. But that is not the question. The question is: can *covert* propaganda be a good thing?

## BILLIE CROW.

BY A. G. MORRIS.

"GOSH! There goes Billie Crow," said Jim, and he put his fingers to his mouth, letting out a long, fiendish, piercing whistle.

Instantly there was a rush of boys from all quarters. Tom, Sam, Walter, Alfie, Charlie . . . shouting, running, kicking and whistling shrilly.

"There's Billie Crow," repeated Jim Barton. "Look at his legs, just look at 'em . . ."

"Like a grass-'opper, 'e is," shouted Sam, laughing.

"Penny toy, wot you winds up . . ." said Alfie.

"Cat on 'ot bricks," commented Walter, originally. "Lord, 'ow 'e picks up those great feet of 'is, sky 'igh . . ."

"Like a bloomin' chorus girl," yelled Charlie, a spotty youth with a foxy face.

Billie Crow saw and heard the boys, waiting at the end of the street. But he had to pass them to get home. And when he did get home there wouldn't be much sympathy waiting for him. He was sixteen years old, and he had never had a job of any kind. He never brought back a penny to help the long family of nine at Fish Court. So now, irresolute, lacking in all self-confidence, a target at home and a butt outside, he stood miserably in the filthy street, with his nail-bitten hands, his ungainly boots, his part-tight-part-loose ill-fitting suit; Billie Crow, Figure of Fun.

"Come on, Bill!" shouted Charlie, "Show us the 'igh kick."

"I gotter git 'ome some'ow," thought Bill.

He took a step forward, a sort of nervous jerk, which threw the knee high up in the air, so that the top part of his leg was almost at right angles to his body. The huge boot hung suspended awkwardly until it lunged downwards and hit the pavement. Then up went the other leg . . . . .



"Put weights on your clod-'oppers," called out Jim, "Or we'll 'ave to tie you up for dangerous."

"I can't 'elp me feet," said Bill, as the group of boys, reinforced by some girls, closed all round him.

"Got a bitter string?" asked Jim.

"Pull aht 'is own boot lices!" said Gertie.

"Why not 'is brices?" squealed Liz.

"Not me brices!" yelled Bill, almost in tears, "I gotter keep up me trahsers."

"Fency thet, nah," laughed Alfie. And all the girls tittered, all except Sarah.

Heads were popping out of the windows by now, and everybody was laughing. Everybody always laughed at Bill. Even the policeman was amused. Even the Curate smiled. Even the dogs grinned and ran about the city at Bill's approach.

"Ready, nah?" shouted Jim.

"Yus," cried Gert.

"One, two, three, "OP!" cried Jim, and the little crowd parted a fraction to release Bill.

They had taken the laces out of his boots and tied them round his legs. But Bill refused to budge.

"'Op! I said," exclaimed Jim.

Bill was dumb and motionless.

"I'll twist 'is arm," said Charlie.

"'E's spoiling our fun," roared Alfie.

"I think you're mean beasts to torment 'im," said Sarah, suddenly.

"Sarah-Spoil-Sport," screeched Gert, pulling her hair hard.

"Listen to Billie's best girl!" yelled out Liz. "She's got measles by the look on 'er."

"Leave Sarah alone," said Bill, in his deep-pitched funereal voice.

"Leave Sarah alone!" mimicked Alfie, and Gert pulled her hair again, harder than ever.

"Get along, 'op frog," shouted Charlie to Bill, "I won't bag your girl, she squints . . ."

"She don't squint," said Bill, and everybody laughed again.

"She does squint," said Liz. "She squints 'orrible, and she's got a skinny neck, an' . . ."

"An' she's gotter crooked nose," interrupted Charlie. "Look at 'er nose . . ."

It was then that Billie hopped. He hopped straight at Charlie and punched his head. Charlie, taken by surprise, fell down but he was up in a flash and pommelling poor Bill.

"A fight!" yelled Jim. "Fair play, boys, undo 'is legs."

"Er nose *is* strite," croaked Bill, lunging out wildly, "Say 'er nose *is* strite." And, before they could stop him to untie the boot laces, he had stumbled and crashed down, with his head on the kerb.

"Gawd, I've killed 'im," blubbered Charlie, standing there twisting his dirty fingers.

"Get 'ome," said Sarah. "Get 'ome, you beasts, and leave 'im to me. Don't you touch 'im, any on you. Murderers."

"'Ere comes a Copper," warned Jim, and the street cleared.

Sarah took Billie's ugly head in her lap. He opened his eyes and smiled at her.

"What's happened here?" said the policeman, joining the sad couple.

"Nothink," answered Bill, "I just slipped an' fell."

"Hmph," grunted the constable, with his eyes fixed on Billie's ankles. "And what about those boot laces?"

"Just a bitter sport," said Bill, "Wasn't it, Sarah?"

"Yes, Bill," she said, taking her cue from him, but her squinty eyes were wet.

"All right," said the policeman, and he walked away.

"Bit of a character, that lad," he thought.

"I better be getting on 'ome," said Bill.

"Let me tike your arm," said Sarah.

"If you're not ashamed of me legs," said Bill huskily.

"You're not ashamed of my nose, nor me squint," said Sarah.

"You don't squint," said Bill firmly, and the pair of them set out along the street.

"We belong now, don't we, Sarah?" asked Bill.

"Yes," said Sarah, "We belong, two funny ones."

"I must leave you 'ere," said Bill, in Fish Court.

"Goodbye," said Sarah. "Goodbye . . . dear."

It was six o'clock as Bill went up the dark staircase which led to "home." The Crow family lived in two rooms.

Mother was there now, with three of Bill's sisters, and Father was pulling off his boots in a corner. He had a red, beery face and angry eyes.

"'Ere comes the bread-winner," he said, as Bill came into the room.

"Wot you done to yer 'ead?" asked Mary.

"Fell down," said Bill.

"Fighting?" asked Ma.

"Yus," said Bill.

Pa laughed.

"Fighting, my foot!" said Elsie. "Spec they tied up 'is legs agine."

"Gotter job?" asked Edie.

"'Im gotter job!" guffawed Pa, nastily, "Nobody wouldn't 'ave 'im, not if 'e pide."

"'E's gotter big enough mouth ter fill," said Ma.

"You'll 'ave to go short now, me lad," said Pa. "I lost me own job ter day. Time you did summink for Ma and Pa."

"Some 'opes," said Elsie.

"Sleep an' eat. That's all 'e does," said Edie.

"An' walk abaht wiv that cross-eyed tart," said Mary.

"Try a circus," suggested Edie, "They tike freaks."

Bill sat down on the edge of the bed. He felt faint and his head swam.

"Swingin' the lead," said Pa.

"I'll look fer work termorrer," said Bill.

"Termorrer!" said Pa. "It's always termorrer with you, me lad."

"I'll not come 'ome agine till I got a job," said Bill.

And everybody laughed.

Now on the outskirts of the town there was a Circus; not a very large, grand one, but decent and properly-run. There were clowns and acrobats and horses, and even a lion. There were a few freaks too, a fat lady, a living skeleton, a giant, a dwarf, and a woman with fins.

Billie had heard nothing about all this, but the next day, true



to his promise, he went out to look for work. He went with little hope, because he knew that his disability, his twitching limbs, ruled him out of almost all employment. People just looked at him and laughed, and told him, in a variety of ways, to get out.

That day he tried at a Hotel. He tried at a butcher's. He tried at a draper's. He tried at a factory.

Then he heard somebody say.

"Look at that boy! Has he escaped from the Circus?"

That touched a chord.

Bill jerked his head sideways, in a typical gesture, and saw a great placard on the wall: BRANDON'S CIRCUS.

It was being held in Woodbridge Park, a twopenny bus ride from where Bill was standing and staring. He had twopences in his pocket, in half-pennies.

"I'll go and 'ave a look," he thought, "I'll go be bus, me legs is tired."

The bus wouldn't stop for Bill, but he was hauled on board by the conductor, who got kicked on the shins by the boy's windmill boots.

"You want to look out," said the conductor. "Keep them legs to yourself."

"Sorry, sir," said Bill, forcing himself, by a huge effort, to shuffle along to a seat. "My fault."

"That's all right," said the conductor, rubbing his shin. "Where for?"

"Woodbridge Park," said Bill, pulling out his money, and dropping some of the half-pennies.

"All thumbs, aren't you?" said a fat man, in a grey bowler, who was sitting next to Bill.

"Sorry, sir," said Bill again, automatically.

"Don't mention it," said the Fat Man cheerfully. "Want to see the Circus, eh? Bit early, aren't you?"

"Not eggzackly see it, sir," replied Bill, feeling kindness in the man's voice.

"Not see it! What's a Circus for, then, if you don't see it?"

"I gotter get a job," said Bill. He looked just an ordinary, rather ugly lad, as he sat there, twiddling his ticket nervously.

The Fat Man laughed, but not unkindly.

"Oho," he said. "So you want to join the Circus. Is that it?"

"Yus," said Bill. "You see, I ain't never 'ad a job, an' I don't bring no money 'ome, an' . . ."

"And so you're trying the Circus? Last hope, eh?" asked the Fat Man. "Well, me lad, what is it to be? Trapeze or tight rope? Or will you be shot out of a gun?"

"I thought I might be a freak, sir," said Bill.

"Good lord," said the Fat Man, in astonishment. "What put that into your head, boy? You're not a beauty, I will say, but I don't think folk would pay to look at your mug!"

"It's me legs, sir," said Bill, "I can't get no job, because of me legs."

"What's wrong with them?" asked the Fat Man, looking down at his companion's shabbily trousered limbs.

"They jumps, sir," said Billie.

"So they ought at your age. I could jump a five-barred gate then."

"I can't stop 'em jumping," explained Bill.

"Do your Dad and Mum know what you're up to?" asked the Fat Man.

"I said I wouldn't come 'ome till I 'ad a job, an' they said Good Riddance to bad rubbish."

"They said that, did they?"

"Yus," said Billie.

"Well, my name's Brandon," said the Fat Man.

"Cripes," said Bill.

"And," continued Mr. Brandon, "if you'll come along, I might find you a job. I won't promise, but I might."

"With the freaks?" asked Billie, brightening up.

"No," said Mr. Brandon. "Not with the freaks, laddie. But you might learn to groom a horse, or help shift the props, or something."

"You 'aven't seen me walk yet, sir," said Bill. "You mayn't want me then . . ."

"We'll see," said Mr. Brandon, standing up. "This is where we get off."

The sun was shining in the Park, as Billie and Brandon walked off towards the Circus tents.

"I'll 'ave a lot to tell Sarah," thought Bill.

Then people began to laugh.

Brandon, who had been thinking of other things, suddenly pricked up his ears, trained to catch the quality of applause or amusement.

"What's the joke here?" he said.

"Me, sir," said Billie miserably, preparing for the usual curt dismissal, when his legs were fully noticed.

"You?" asked Brandon. Then he saw Bill's boots in action, swinging up and down, jerking and wobbling fantastically. "So that's what you meant by jumping," he added.

"Yes, sir," said Bill. "I can't 'elp it, it comes."

"Lucky for you, maybe," said Brandon. "Come on, boy, quick."

"Lucky for me?" wondered Bill. "Lucky?"

He scabbled along at full speed, his heart racing, his legs flying.

"Bit of a kangaroo, aren't you?" said Brandon. "What's your name?"

"Billie Crow, sir."

"And folk laugh at you, do they?"

"Yus. They can't 'elp it . . ."

"Can't help it, eh? Well, it's a gift to make people laugh, Bill."

That was a new angle, rather incomprehensible.

"Don't seem much of a gift to me, sir," said Bill.

"You wait," said Brandon, kindly. "You'll find out."

"I don't get you, sir," said Billie.

"Come on, Charlie," said Brandon, smiling.

"Not Charlie, sir," said Billie.

"All right, Bill," said Brandon. "My mistake."

That very night Billie appeared in the ring as a clown. It was a try-out, and he was deadly scared, but luckily nervousness only made his legs and arms wriggle and twist into stranger contortions than ever . . . .

"Quid a week and your keep," said Brandon afterward.

"You made 'em laugh. Split like sausages they did."

"Praps it was the others, sir," said Bill. "They was funny."



"Perhaps," said Brandon. "Yes, Bill, perhaps it was the others."

He winked at another man who was standing near, and they both laughed a lot.

But already Bill was learning that laughter could be a very pleasant thing.

So he wrote to Sarah, but not to Ma and Pa.

And it was only the first of many letters to her from all over England and Wales.

Now Brandon had not taken on Bill just because of his legs. Brandon, although he was a man of common earth, had a certain flair for assessing character and potential talent.

Billie had always been laughed at at home, he had been made a joke, and he had lost all faith in himself, but he had a good brain and in his new surroundings, finding that it really was a gift to make men laugh, he discovered self-confidence and he blossomed, if not exactly like a rose.

By much patience and observation he realized the necessity of control, even in clowning. He began by being merely a Figure-of-Fun, because his legs jumped and kicked, but gradually, with cooler brain and steadier nerves, he managed largely to enslave his limbs, to crescendo or decrescendo the contortions to the best advantage. He became, in his way, an artist.

Brandon watched him. One day he took him aside.

"You're getting along, boy," he said. "I'll give you a freer hand. Think out some gags, use your voice. It's funny. Try different clothes. I'll fix you an act of your own. You can pick chaps to help you with it."

"Thank you, sir," said Bill. "I'd meant to ask you for a chance."

"Well, Bill, you got it now," said Brandon.

After that encouragement Bill tried out many ideas, transforming himself, by turns, into an Eton-collared boy, a Soldier on parade, a Policeman on point duty . . . .

A car, with an impatient driver and a load of clowns, would drive furiously into the ring, only to be held up by an idiotic Constable, with a melancholy voice and an insatiable demand for licences.

"But you've had me driving licence," protested the clown at the wheel.

"Where's your dog licence, then?" asked Bill.

"I ain't got a dog . . ."

"Marriage lines, then, and 'urry up."

"But I ain't married."

"Then you'll 'ave to walk . . ."

And so on, until at last the Motorist, producing a gun licence, would open up machine-gun fire on the tormentor and drive the car straight at him.

Then Bill, for the first time, would give his legs full play. All round the ring, with the car chasing him and the gun firing, he would shuffle and shamle, kicking, hopping like a jumping bean, falling over buckets of water, shinning up greasy poles until he was finally shoved out of sight on the very nose of the automobile, to a running fire of applause, whistles and laughter . . . .

He was a success, a solo clown, who was mastering his technique, moulding his infirmities to his art, reading and thinking a lot . . .

But naturally it wasn't cake and ale all the time. Bill had the good-will of Brandon, but his quick success made him an object of jealousy to some of the older men, specially to those clowns who were pushed into second place by him.

"They'll soon get tired of your legs, Crow," said Morton, an old stager, with a tired, sagging mouth.

"Maybe," said Bill, good humouredly.

"Luck you got, more 'an skill," persisted Morton.

"I daresay," agreed Bill, refusing to quarrel, and pitying the older man.

"Well, any'ow, you can't come it over me or any of the boys," said Morton, "I bin twenty years in the ring."

"I hope you'll 'ave twenty more," said Bill.

His self-confidence was no longer rattled by such spleen. He had moved a long way from Fish Court, and he knew his worth.

"They was laughing at me, afore you was born," shouted the old clown, more and more irritated by Bill's calmness.

"Praps," said Bill, grinning, "they'll be laughing at you when I'm dead, or vicy-versy."

"You just look out then, and no oiling round the Boss," said Morton angrily. "There's some of us watching you, an' we won't 'ave no favritism . . ."

"I should go and 'ave a lay down, old boy . . ." said Bill, moving off to his quarters.

He wasn't worried. He trusted firmly in Brandon's common-sense and wide open eyes, and he was right.

The clowns went on strike one night, and tried to shove the blame on to Billie.

"E's not playing a straight game with any of us, Boss, nor with you," said Morton, "and we won't go into the Ring with 'im."

"You needn't," said Brandon evenly, "but he can go into the Ring without you . . . Come here, Crow."

"Sir," said Bill.

"Some of the fellows are a little bit tired to-night, I think. You'll do a turn alone. Can you manage?"

"I think so, sir," answered Bill.

So the strike became a lock-out . . . .

And Billie just went on learning his job, picking up aitches bit by bit, and taking no notice of spokes in his wheel.

Petty plots petered out feebly, and threats to bash him up ended in nothing worse than bruises, which may have been accidental . . . .

But through all his troubles and triumphs Billie never forgot Sarah.

In two years time, when he was eighteen, he was earning five pounds a week. Half of this he sent home, partly from a sense of duty, partly from pride in achievement; but he never gave name or address. He just put the money in an envelope and registered it.

Only Sarah knew where he was each week, and what he was.

"Any news of the grass-'opper, Squint-Eye?" asked Charlie, very tall now, with a cigarette hanging to his loose lip.

"Better ask 'is Pa," said Sarah. "They may 'ave 'eard sommink."

"You know more 'an you'll say," said Charlie.

"Not your business," said Sarah, "Mebbe 'e'll come back and fight you . . ."



"No fear, 'e'll end in the Work 'Ouse, that performing flea."

"Then 'e'll meet you there," said Sarah, walking away.

And nobody in Fish Court would admit that the weekly money came from Bill. The address was always *typed*.

"From Bill? No fear," said Pa.

"Then where does the brass come from?" asked Ma, in a filthy apron.

"Not from 'im," said Mary. But they all knew it did, and it stuck in their gullets. All the same they swallowed it.

"'Ow could 'e earn anythink?" asked Elsie. "With those legs?"

Almost at that very moment Billie, legs and all, was bounding incredibly out of the ring, dripping wet from innumerable buckets of water, and almost deafened by applause and delighted laughter.

"Boss wants to see you," said a friend.

"Righto," said Bill, and he went to find Brandon.

"Ullo, Billie," said Brandon, "I want you to meet Mr. Porson."

"'Fraid I'm a bit wet, sir," said Bill, smiling and shaking hands.

"Never mind that, Charlie," said Porson.

"Charlie?" thought Bill, and his mind went back two years, to the time when Brandon had made the same mistake in Woodbridge Park.

But Billie was more on the spot now. He knew what was happening to him. He flushed.

"Films, sir?" he said, speaking to Brandon.

"Yes, Bill, it's come," replied Brandon. "I knew I couldn't hold you long. Wouldn't be right."

Bill was silent. He put out his hand and gripped Brandon's hard.

"Don't worry about me, boy," said Brandon, "I'll watch you go up."

"You're a good man, sir," said Bill. Then he turned to Porson. "D'you really want me?" he asked.

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't, Crow," said Porson.

"You think I'll . . . make good?"

"You've got voice and walk," said Porson. "Personality

too. You made me laugh, sir, and that's not easy. Chaplin the Second, maybe. We'll soon find out with the tests. Brandon will release you when you wish. I hope it'll be soon."

Bill didn't look at Brandon when he next spoke.

"Yes, it'll be soon," he said. Then, with a rush of confidence, "I knew myself that it would come one day . . ."

"Brandon's told me a bit of your history, Crow," said Porson, "and I want to make a picture of you in that slum of yours, with the boys tormenting you, tying you up, making you hop and so forth."

"D'you mind if I go and write a letter, sir?" asked Bill.

"Bless the boy, no," said Porson. "Then we'll sign you up Twenty pounds a week for the first picture. Then we'll see."

So Bill wrote to Sarah.

"Dearest Sarah,

"They want me on the films now. I hope you can be in my first picture too. I've kept away from you for all this time, and worked. But now I can see you again, and perhaps we needn't say Goodbye ever any more.

"Yours affectionately,  
Bill."

Sarah cried for joy, when she read that, but she was a little afraid, because Bill had studied to spell like a book.

"And I do squint," she said to herself, in front of a tiny mirror. "An' 'e's seen lovely girls jump through 'oops, an' acrobats in spangled tights . . ."

But she need not have been frightened, for Bill looked at her eyes, and they shone like stars; he looked at her nose, and it was straight . . .

And Porson found in Sarah a most gentle and sensitive Cinderella. . . .

They were to film the old street, and there were jobs for many in the crowd. Even Pa and Ma were impressed.

"'E allers made 'em larf," said Pa, very red and boozy.

"Remembered 'is 'ome, too," said Ma to a reporter. "Sent money as reglar as a clock. Me favrit boy, 'e was. Never a wrong word atween us . . ."

"Now, they're off," said Mary. "'Is nime's Johnnie 'Are, in the picksher."

"Gosh! There goes Johnnie 'Are," said Jim, and he put his fingers to his mouth, letting out a long, fiendish, piercing whistle.

Instantly there was a rush of boys from all quarters. Tom, Sam, Walter, Alfie, Charlie . . . .

"There's Johnnie 'Are," repeated Jim Barton. "Look at 'is legs, just look at 'em . . ."

"Like a grass-'opper, 'e is," shouted Sam, laughing.

And there he stood at the end of the street, irresolute, lacking in all self-confidence, a target at home and a butt outside, with his nail-bitten hands and his great ungainly boots . . .

So The Play, such a strange revival of old memories, wound itself out, until at last Bill-Johnnie was free to take Sarah-Maria into his arms, to kiss her and to tell her that he had always loved her. She looked up at him and smiled, and they were still like that, long after the cameras had stopped. They had forgotten time and place and crowds and fame. For The Play was the same as Reality.



## ESTONIA AFTER TWENTY YEARS

BY E. R. SARV

THE post-War years witnessed the creation of many new States all aiming at constitutions based upon extreme democratic principles. But it soon became apparent that, however desirable such a government might be on ethical and moral grounds, it could only be successful when the people—as for instance in the case of Great Britain—had been trained by centuries of democratic evolution.

If the situation was to be saved, and the principles of democracy preserved, there was only one thing to be done, while leaving the ultimate power in the hands of the people, at the same time to control and direct this power until such time as the citizens were able to grasp the responsibilities as well as the rights of popular government. It is in the States that followed this course that one finds nowadays true democracies working towards the same ideals as those held by the countries which they once took as their models.

A few days ago one of the oldest of these young democracies, Estonia, celebrated her twentieth anniversary. During the two decades of her existence very little has happened in this most northern of the Baltic States startling enough to attract world-wide attention. Nevertheless she, like many others, has gone through an internal crisis, and a new form of democracy singularly attractive and suitable to the country and people has been contrived.

After being the battleground of Eastern and Western Europe for five hundred years Estonia at length obtained her freedom and independence through the World War. Twenty years of peaceful progress have now passed since this emancipation, and the Estonians—whom Professors A. J. Grant and H. W. V. Temperley in their standard work describe as “one of the best educated races in Europe”—have welcomed this opportunity

of consolidating and developing their national life—even though it has brought them no “headlines” in the world’s press.

There is a very real reason why Britain should be interested in the affairs of this country, for during the Estonian War of Liberation in 1917 she played a decisive part in checking the spread of communism from revolutionary Russia through the Baltic. It was certainly a critical time for Estonia. The Russian army was within thirty miles of the capital by land, and the Russian fleet was rapidly approaching by sea. Then, at the crucial moment, a British naval squadron, under Admiral Sinclair, appeared in the Gulf of Tallinn. The Russian fleet was repulsed, and with the support—both material and moral—of the British ships, the Estonians were enabled to drive the enemy forces from their borders.

The first Constitution of Estonia comprised a State Assembly exercising political power on behalf of the people with little or no control from the guiding hand of a strong executive. In the matter of constituting governments, accepting resignations, and ratifying treaties, it was vested with the prerogatives of the head of a parliamentary state. The Government itself was reduced to the position of a mere executive committee, while the Prime Minister, though having the title, wielded none of the powers of a chief minister. These circumstances raised many obstacles to the smooth working of government, and at the same time it was found extremely difficult for any one of the various political parties to obtain a clear majority.

While a great deal of social and economic reconstruction was carried through despite these constitutional difficulties the State Assembly progressively lost prestige, as party strife and coalition manoeuvres were allowed to interfere with the efficient running of the State. During the years of depression the situation deteriorated considerably, and the necessity for a strong executive became more and more apparent. The constitution was in urgent need of revision, but this could only be done, providing popular consent was obtained. A nationwide publicity campaign was begun which resulted in the birth of a strong, new political movement, differing from any other previously known in the country by its pronounced fascist tendencies.

In the emergency the National Assembly placed before the people two measures for constitutional reform, but these were rejected in favour of a scheme submitted by the leaders of this "fascist" movement. The result was that by an impressive majority a new constitution was adopted which gave to the President almost dictatorial powers enabling him if necessary to oppose any parliamentary majority which might militate against the best interests of the State.

The constitution was scarcely adopted, however, before the leaders of the new movement, taking advantage of their temporary popularity, decided to launch an anti-parliamentary reaction and, threatened if necessary, even to use force to secure the presidential seat for one of themselves.

Fortunately for the country there was at this time at the head of Estonia's affairs a most far-seeing and disinterested statesman whose popularity not even all the intrigues of the new fascist movement could diminish. This was Mr. Konstantin Päts, the President, who saw quickly how dangerous it would be if the country were to be allowed to be made the sport of political adventurers. Using the extensive powers given to him by the new constitution he suspended the activities of all political parties, and, giving him wide powers and a seat in the cabinet, nominated as his chief executive General John Laidoner, Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Thus began a new era. Right from the beginning Mr. Päts rejected the principle of excessive presidential power. He aimed at the formation of a new constituent assembly, and the re-organization and consolidation of the national social and administrative life of the country in such a way as to render any possible future change in the constitution possible only by appeal to popular referendum under normal conditions.

To bring about this desirable state of affairs Mr. Päts first of all appealed to and received from the people full powers of action on their behalf. He then convoked a National Assembly, the first chamber of which consisted of 80 members who were elected from constituencies by universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage. In a second chamber there were 40 members, representative of and elected by various professional and



commercial bodies, including 10 members nominated by the President himself.

By the provisions of the new constitution (which came into force at midnight on the eve of 1938) Estonia remains a representative democracy governed by the strong executive necessitated by the geographical position of the country and the exigencies of a strong economic policy.

There is a two-chambered parliament and a president, and thus it has a certain superficial resemblance to the constitution set up by Mr. de Valera in Ireland. But, above all, it is a constitution which has been built upon the accumulated experience of these twenty years.

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The so-called Baltic *Bloc* or Baltic Union (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) has ever since the Great War, and particularly so in recent times, been considered by many to be in an extremely unenviable position. 'What will be the fate of countries who on the one hand are the possible victims of German *Drang nach Osten* and on the other of Russian ambitions on the Baltic?' it may well be asked. Certainly to the casual observer the position seems dangerous in the extreme.

Is there any real cause for alarm, however? There are two very good reasons why Estonia at any rate need not be too anxious about the situation. Germany's eastward-thrusting tendencies are held in check by the thought that, as things are at present, there is in Estonia a bulwark against communist interference, while Russia is given pause when she considers that she has as neighbour a democratic State with no special leanings towards a type of government inimical to her own. Between these counterbalancing forces Estonia feels herself safe and is additionally reassured by the fact that Russia's economic interests have been substantially removed from her Western border. Furthermore, relations between Russia and the Baltic States have for many years been completely normal, and, as will be clear to any student of foreign affairs, Russia, while wanting peace generally, is most particularly anxious to avoid hostilities in Western Europe.

Apart from normal international relationships the Baltic States have made it a rule not to concern themselves in the

internal affairs of other countries and, extending this principle to their own affairs, neither will they tolerate interference in their own. This policy has made it possible to maintain intercourse even on a friendly basis both with communist Russia and Nazi Germany.

General Laidoner, in a recent speech on the problems of foreign policy, made it clear that Estonia has rallied to the group of "alliance-free" states of which the Swedish Prime Minister has been the spokesman :

" We do not want to bind ourselves with anti-communistic-nationalistic-fascistic pacts and treaties such as were urged upon us sometime ago under the so-called Eastern Pact. . . . We want to be neutral but we must protect that neutrality. Every nation, small or great, must be ready to resist attack. Only those small nations have grown strong that have been ready to defend themselves."

If at some remote future date a war were to break out in North-Eastern Europe, the States immediately concerned would be Latvia and Lithuania, which are on the direct line of march between the Russian and the German frontiers. It is conceivable that geographically, Estonia, up on the Northern Baltic, might be able to remain outside the dispute, but if she were bound by treaties she would be obliged to come immediately to the assistance of her neighbours. While such considerations as these have given rise to a body of opinion in Estonia which favours an isolationist policy towards Latvia and Lithuania, it is at the same time realized that whichever of the Baltic States was attacked the others could not escape being eventually drawn into the quarrel. At present, therefore, since their interests are so closely connected, it seems unlikely that the long-standing union of the Baltic States will be dissolved.

## LABOUR'S RECORD IN NEW ZEALAND.

BY F. L. W. WOOD.

WITHIN a few months New Zealand will face a general election, and the voters will pronounce their verdict on the record of our first Labour Government. At present both sides admit that the country is prosperous. The Government claims that this is "to a major extent" due to its own activities, which will maintain and increase that prosperity in the future. The objective is social security, so that every person "able and willing to work" will be guaranteed what one might call the material basis of "the good life," while the aged and infirm will be cared for. This objective, in Labour's view, will be attained through strong leadership and control by a democratically elected government. The opposition retorts that New Zealand's present prosperity is due to the high prices received for our exports. Government spending, it is allowed, has helped for the moment, but at a heavy price to be paid later. Further, government "leadership and control" inevitably entangle private enterprise, which is vital to prosperity, within a paralysing mass of regulations. Thus by both sides attention is drawn to the underlying problem of the State's place in economic life. What can the State really do to make its subjects prosperous?

The Labour Government's doctrine that it can do a very great deal is no new one in New Zealand. Ever since we have had self-government, but especially under the radical governments of the 'nineties and again during war emergencies and post-war depressions, politics have been dominated chiefly by direct State intervention in economic affairs. Such intervention has rarely concerned itself with theories or with ultimate objectives but has arisen from the practical fact that the free-play of economic individualism often produced results which are both unjust and socially undesirable. There followed the conclusion



that the Government must discipline individual selfishness and inefficiency, and should guide the country's economic life as a whole. In a new country, with a relatively simple economic structure, such reasoning is more natural than in the complexity of the old world. Further, in a new country it is relatively easy for the State to act. Society is less rigidly organized. Issues are often clearer, and the working of economic laws more easy to follow. The result has been that New Zealand, like other new countries, is far less individualistic than might appear on the surface. As elsewhere, State intervention has steadily increased, and at least as much as elsewhere industries in difficulties have taken it for granted that the State should assist them, however much they may criticize "interference" in the abstract.

Under pressure of national crisis the preceding Coalition evolved and acted upon a fairly coherent plan to hasten and control the adaptation of New Zealand's economy to changed world conditions; it was hoped to make the process less painful and more equitable than if it had been left to blind economic forces. In particular, relief was sought through the cardinal policies of exchange depreciation and reduction of local costs, which involved a spectacular extension of the State's sphere of action. So far, for example, the exchange rate had been normally left in the hands of the private banks. It was a big change for the Government to fix the exchange-rate, as a matter of general policy, at a figure different from that desired by the great majority of the bankers. Again, the policy of reducing local costs involved an attack on wage and interest rates. The State "cut" not only wages and salaries in the civil service, but (through the Arbitration Court) those in private industry. It achieved a big reduction in overdraft and discount rates by pressure upon the banks. Interest on the public debt (Government and Local Bodies) was reduced by compulsory conversion in 1933; and all rents, and interest rates on mortgages, etc., were also "cut" by legislation. In some cases, notably in the farming industry, the rights of creditors were indefinitely suspended. These proceedings often cut across law and custom and repudiated the sanctity of contract in the name of the national good. Further, the Coalition set up new institutions through which the State could

act on economic life. For example, the Reserve Bank was created and given control of currency and exchange, with considerable power over credit, and the Mortgage Corporation consolidated the various Government lending departments; both these institutions could be relied upon to carry out the Government's policy. Again, the basic farming industries were given strong Government leadership in the form of the Executive Commission of Agriculture, and a judicial procedure for the ultimate writing off of mortgage debts which exceeded the actual value of the farm.

In short, the Coalition handed on to the Labour Government a very active "social service" tradition. Labour proceeded to carry this tradition still further. As compared with the Coalition it had an optimistic idea of the possibilities of State action. Coalition spokesmen often defended the policy of "deflating" costs on the ground that New Zealand must always cut her coat according to her cloth—meaning that conditions within the Dominion were and always would be controlled by the prices realized for her exports. Labour, then in opposition, had taken the contrary view, that a wise financial and commercial policy could have virtually "insulated" New Zealand from the depression prevailing overseas. The key to the matter, it was urged, lay in local purchasing power. Deflation and rigid Government economy, by destroying purchasing power, deepened the depression they were supposed to relieve. What was needed was a policy of "expansion." Generous social services and a vigorous public works policy were essential, and, above all, wages should have been maintained. Through such means, said Labour spokesmen, the Government held the power to maintain standards of living. The depression was unnecessary; it was due to human folly, not fundamentally to the operation of forces beyond local control.

The Labour Party's optimism was in part a matter of faith, for its leaders were temperamentally inclined to believe that problems would yield before the enthusiasm of men who combined good will with energy. But it was reinforced also by the belief that concrete plans were actually available. These plans were summarized in Labour's election platform of 1935, which in the official view had been perfected by careful study

during the long years spent in opposition. It could, therefore, be put into operation as soon as the Law Drafting Office had translated it into statutory terms. The result was that, in fact, the programme was acted upon after the election with remarkable rapidity and completeness.

One of the first laws to be passed was that reforming the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. A few small changes in the law brought the Bank strictly under Government control. Its Governor is, as before, appointed by the Government, but the shareholders were bought out (full compensation—the market value of shares on the day of the General Election—was granted), and the Directors now hold office during the pleasure of the Government. The Bank's function is now "to give effect as far as may be to the monetary policy of the Government as communicated to it from time to time by the Minister of Finance." At the same time the limits on the amount of accommodation which the Bank could grant to the Government were relaxed or removed, and its powers over the private banks were greatly increased. It is perhaps worth remarking that the Reserve Bank of New Zealand cannot use many of the means by which the Bank of England more or less subtly influences monetary and financial operations. Therefore, a degree of influence which can be taken for granted in England must in New Zealand be provided for in statutory form. In particular, the Reserve Bank was given power to coerce the Trading Banks by varying the amount of reserves which they must deposit with it. Further, they are now compelled to disclose to the Reserve Bank the general tendency of their credit policy by giving regular information about overdrafts authorized but unused. Finally, the Reserve Bank is given the power to control the allocation of sterling exchange—a power, which if exercised, would enable it to regulate imports.

There is little indication, that the social control of credit will be used according to the ideas of Major Douglas. Labour's election campaign did in fact attract many social credit votes, and there are Douglas-minded men both in the caucus and in the Cabinet. But the policy of Mr. Nash, as Minister of Finance, follows different lines. In his view the function of credit is to enable labour to turn raw materials into



consumable goods. The State's main duty in the matter is to see that when Labour, materials, and demand for finished goods are all available, proceedings shall not be held up for lack of credit. In these circumstances, the guiding principle is that the Central Bank should provide the necessary credit on the condition that corresponding assets are created. This idea is illustrated, for example, in the Government's Housing Scheme. There was an admitted shortage of houses in New Zealand, and in the Government's view they were unlikely to be supplied in sufficient quantities and sufficiently cheaply by private enterprise. Accordingly, the State has undertaken to build and let houses. A new Department was created for this purpose, and organized with astonishing speed and efficiency, and as a result of its work, State Houses are already being built in most of the bigger towns. They are, it is said, of uniformly high quality but attractively varied appearance, and the Department claims that it is being besieged by would-be tenants. This whole scheme is financed by Reserve Bank credit; but the rent paid by tenants is calculated to include repayment of the Bank's loan during the lifetime of the houses.

The Housing Scheme is typical of the Labour Government's attitude towards economic problems. The party's avowed objective is Socialism, but the Prime Minister is always anxious to avoid discussion of the Government's proposals in terms of any such socialist objective. His appeal is always to common sense; in his own phrase, "the socialization of the means of production will look after itself, if we face the current problems in an intelligent fashion." He says that the Government is only too willing that goods and services should be provided by private enterprise, so long as private enterprise will do its job well. The State is plainly called upon to interfere in two main instances: when private enterprise cannot provide the necessary services except perhaps at very high price, and where it has got into difficulties from which it cannot extricate itself. In more general terms, wherever there is inefficiency and waste, there is a *prima facie* case for Government action, for inefficiency harms both those engaged in the industry concerned and also the community as a whole.

There are many examples of action along these lines. Price-cutting in the retailing of petrol and of bread led to price-fixing by Order-in-Council (under legislation passed by previous Governments). Overlapping and "economic waste" in the transport system (particularly competition between road transport and the State-owned railway system) has accelerated the existing tendency for all transport services to be minutely regulated if not directly operated by the State. Already a number of motor-services have been bought, while the Minister of Transport says that it may be necessary to have unified control before real efficiency can be obtained, and he cites by way of example the London Transport system. Again, "inefficient" marketing methods in foodstuffs led to Government enquiry, and power has been taken by the Government to regulate selling methods very closely, and if necessary to buy the goods and market them itself. In more general terms, an Industrial Efficiency Act has been passed, which aims at rationalization under Government leadership, though the consent of a majority of those operating it is necessary for reconstruction of an existing industry. And in all these cases, the trend is the same. It is towards Government leadership or regulation, which is used in each case to fix and stabilize the conditions under which industry operates. This is done sometimes directly, and sometimes through such agencies as the restored arbitration system, to which have been added the new principles of the basic wage, compulsory unionism, and the forty-hour week. The effect is to give to each element in the industrial structure a definite and assured position, provided that its work is carried on with "reasonable efficiency." This new security is used to persuade tradesmen to accept a rate of profit which is lower, because steadier, and to promise their employees higher and more secure wages.

The same broad trend is plain in Labour's agricultural policy. In New Zealand farming is comparatively secure from such disasters as droughts and floods, but the prices received for farm produce on the world market have fluctuated wildly. For example, between 1925 and 1935 the price received for a cwt. of butter varied between 64/- and 230/-. This extreme insecurity led Labour, while in Opposition, to put forward a scheme for

giving the farmer guaranteed prices. The party promised, if returned to power, to pay guaranteed prices for primary products based on average returns to farmers during "the past eight or ten years." Further, it undertook to negotiate trade agreements with our customers overseas, so that a maximum amount of our primary produce should be sold overseas in an orderly manner.

The scheme as explained during the election campaign was a little nebulous, but it certainly played its part in attracting the votes of the small farmers. With the election won, it had to be reduced to concrete form. In the first instance it has been applied only to the dairying industry (which supplies about 2/5th of our exports) on the ground that here the need was greatest. The State now takes over all dairy produce for export, buying it in a finished state when it is placed on the overseas steamer. The price paid varies according to exacting standards of quality. The butter and cheese is then shipped to England, and its sale is managed by the Government Dairy Sales Division (previously the London end of the producers' elected Dairy Board), who distribute it through Tooley Street agents. This marketing arrangement follows closely the plans for more orderly marketing which had been worked out by the old Dairy Board, before its functions were virtually taken over by the Government, and it is generally admitted to be a great improvement on older methods. As regards the farmer in New Zealand, he can now count on a definite price for his dairy produce, a price which is fixed each year for the coming export season. Further, the Government took over and simplified its predecessor's policy of keeping interest rates low and of writing off mortgage debts which were greater than the present value of the farm. This point is of great importance in view of the part played by mortgage finance in New Zealand farming. Before the depression it was estimated that 1/3rd of the average farmer's expenditure was made up of interest and rent. It is on the whole of less importance to the farmer that agricultural wages have been raised and stabilized: for the New Zealand farm employs comparatively few wage earners. The original idea seems to have been price stabilization over a period of years, not subsidy, though it could be argued that the country can afford to pay a certain price for the benefit



of giving efficient farmers a steady income. But if the process goes too far it would have an inflationary tendency, through expansion of central bank credit.

This tendency is feared all the more because of other "expansionist" tendencies in Labour policy. Thus, wages have been restored to the 1931 level, both within and without the public service, and the amount paid in pensions to the aged and infirm has been greatly increased. These steps, it is claimed, increase "social security" and help to lift the purchasing power of the people, but at the cost of considerable expenditure by the State. Still more important, however, is capital expenditure on public works. Labour came to power pledged to carry out the "vigorous public works policy" which (while in opposition) it had demanded as an anti-depression measure. Accordingly the Public Works Department was re-equipped (the Coalition had not favoured labour-saving machinery, because its object was to spread employment), a new model agreement was concluded between the Department and its employees, and the resuscitated Department was set to work with a speed exceeding that of the boom years. The current budget provides for public works expenditure of £17,367,000. This money is to be provided by the funds of various Government departments: but there is a plain hint that if necessary central bank credit will be called upon.

The Conservative criticism of these proceedings is not that the various public works are in themselves undesirable, or even that New Zealand cannot afford them. It is that such public works should have been kept for times of depression. By spending now, when she is prosperous, New Zealand is depriving herself of reserves which should be kept for the next depression, the onset of which will tempt a Government without resources to experiment in currency inflation. Further, it is urged, New Zealand is incapacitating herself to meet further crises by restricting her whole economy within a rigid framework of Government control. Directly or indirectly, the State is fixing more and more firmly the conditions under which labour shall be employed. To an increasing extent it is fixing the prices at which raw materials may be bought and finished products sold. All this, it is claimed, limits progressively the

extent to which a man of exceptional gifts may make use of his talents to the benefit alike of himself and of the community. It tends to reduce the whole society to the level of an unimaginative civil service.

Finally, it is held, practical difficulties have already shown the unsoundness of the Government's proceedings. For example, as throughout the world, the cost of living is rising, and each increase is widely attributed to the Government. Certain difficulties have already arisen within the Dairy industry because the cheese-producers believed themselves to be less favoured by the guaranteed price than were the farmers supplying butter factories. It is pointed out, further, that fixed prices may lead to over—or under—supply unless the production side of the industry is also brought under control. Again, some manufacturers are complaining that Labour's legislation has so increased their costs that they cannot compete with imports. And the list of complaints is growing so as to provoke the question: are these emerging difficulties symptoms that the Government's whole policy is mistaken, or are they minor problems of the kind which appear continually when any constructive policy is being carried out, and which can be met by minor modifications?

Some of this progress may have to be paid for later, and the real test will come should export prices again fall heavily. Perhaps the main question at present at issue is whether the Government will equip itself to meet the test by evolving what seems to have been lacking up to this point, namely, a clearly conceived and coherent plan of how to reach a well-defined goal. Many of the current difficulties seem to arise from an empirical method of approach. The Government has been guided by a broad humanitarianism, by an acute sense of practical problems demanding attention, by a group of policies to which it became pledged while in opposition and by some active work and thought applied to sections of the national economy. The present question is whether Cabinet Ministers will give themselves time to think about the problem as a whole. Of some Ministers at least, it may be said that the less they allow themselves to be absorbed by day to day detailed administration, the more likely they will be to achieve enduring results.

## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

**C**ERTAINLY the dictators keep the world guessing. Three facts, or groups of facts, in the opening week of February stand out. First of these is the renewal of piracy around the Spanish coast, and renewed this time with definite direction against British shipping; one **Freebooting** and vessel sunk by a mysterious submarine, the other **Swashbuckling** destroyed by bombs from aeroplanes boldly marked as General Franco's. In each case a foreign "observer" representing the Non-Intervention Committee, was on board. Second comes the Italian declaration of willingness to sink at sight any submarine observed on or near the recognized trade routes. Now, does this mean that General Franco is acting in opposition to the wishes of the Italian dictator, although still beholden to him for supplies in men and material—to the point of having in his armies strong Italian contingents—which keep themselves distinct, and over whose exploits Italy is bidden to exalt? If it does not mean this, what does it mean? The dictatorial formula for answers to such action as General Franco's aeroplanes (at least) have unquestionably taken, is on record: the answer is to hit back and hit hard. Great Britain however, is in a position to hit back more effectively and less brutally; she can either capture or if necessary sink important units of Franco's sea force, or can immobilize the whole. This is so evident that one must presume either that General Franco counts on indefinite impunity for insult and damage to British power, or that he is deliberately provoking reprisals. But everybody knows that England cannot be indefinitely challenged with impunity. What then, if he desires to see the British take action, can be his motive? Is it in the hope that in such a case Italy's limited intervention will become unlimited?

Nothing in the situation was a graver symptom than the



almost complete absence of editorial comment in the *Times*. If a Labour Government were in power it would have been almost impossible for it to avoid treating this aggression as a *casus belli*; pressure from their own side to act, taunts from the other if they did not act, would have been irresistible. These are the moments when one may be thankful for a Government which is National not only in name but in aspiration. And until the state of the world alters out of recognition, I do not see how any kind of purely party government can be tolerable. One must have an organization that represents the will of at least three-fourths of the community.

That conclusion is driven home by the third of the disquieting facts which have been referred to. Herr Hitler has carried out a concentration which ensures that the collective will behind his amazing machinery shall function in a smooth unity. Nobody seems to know the precise reason for each individual change, but the main purpose is unmistakeable—unification. It is known that at a crucial moment the dictator's policy encountered opposition in his central cabinet. General von Blomberg at the head of the Army, Baron von Neurath at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dr. Schacht at the Ministry of Economics all opposed the move into the Rhineland as too risky. Herr Hitler took his own way successfully. The men who opposed him were not discarded at once, but they are now, none of them, in their former position. The man whose power is increased is Goering—now Field Marshal. It would be difficult to draw any deductions from the change pointing to a less aggressive policy.

There is this further consideration. If the British power submits to the injuries inflicted by General Franco's aeroplanes and his submarine, will the governing forces in Germany anticipate resistance from Great Britain to any step they may take, short of direct attack on British territory or on the Rhine frontier?

Still, there are more cheerful aspects to dwell on. Herr Hitler has found it necessary to carry out an operation very similar to that undertaken by his opposite number in Russia;

**Eclipse of  
the Military  
Chiefs** and his purge is much less revolting than Stalin's. It, again, was some what less bloody and treacherous than the German clearances of June 30th, 1934.

The dictators are less nervous in taking steps to assure their supremacy ; they feel less need to "mak' siccar ;" it is possible that some of those whom Stalin dismissed may still be alive. Herr Hitler had indeed to move with some degree of caution, for he was striking at the army, and although the army assisted his purge in 1934 it was not gratified by the simultaneous "liquidation" of General von Schleicher. One may perhaps guess that these critical decisions were taken because the army's *esprit de corps* had been shaken by insistence in army circles on a tradition that had lost its binding power. General von Blomberg married his secretary. Under the old régime, this breach of caste would have carried dismissal as a matter of course. Part of the army at least thought that Herr Hitler should take the same view of the alliance as Kaiser Wilhelm would have taken. But it is simply not conceivable that in the new Germany that opinion should be universal throughout the Service. Herr Hitler may have seen a way to get rid of a military adviser whose "knowledge and courage" had seemed to him deficient "shortly before the occupation of the Rhineland." To retain him in his post would have offended part of the army, to dismiss him on the ground of his marriage would have offended another part ; the solution was to fill the supreme military office not by promotion but by absorption of it into the *Führer's* own attributes. A step is thus taken which could not have been taken without risk if General von Blomberg had not by his personal action in a private matter weakened the professional support behind him.

It is curious to recall that in 1914 during the crisis which followed the Curragh incident, Mr. Asquith had recourse to a similar expedient, taking over the War Office. The purpose then was to allay public disquiet, and silence the criticism which would have been directed against the choice of any man less supremely responsible. That may have weighed also with Herr Hitler. But it was certainly not the desire of Mr. Asquith to aggrandize his personal power. That desire is a necessary part of a dictator's mentality ; and we may take it that whatever power of contributing independently to the shaping of policy had been hitherto vested in the military chiefs has now disappeared. There is likely to be some discontent in the army ;

but this matters far less to Herr Hitler than it would to Stalin. The facts of geography must always give to some Russian commanders some freedom of initiative; Germany is all concentrated within a small boundary. Herr Hitler has this advantage that he has not so much need to be suspicious of able men as his Russian counterpart—that other spiritual heir of Lenin.

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There is nothing new to observe about the Far Eastern situation, except that the United States authorities have been pushed by internal signs of revolt into a denial of anything but 'I'm alone' that could be called co-operation with Great Britain. America will spend what she considers **still the Watch-word of U.S.A.** necessary for her own safety; the American navy "will stand on its own feet"—which is emphatic enough, though a curiously unnautical metaphor. But whatever signs of sense there were in the Washington Agreement have vanished, up the chimney of a furnace where uncontrolled expenditure is stoked up. It is curious how Americans—at least, in the United States—abhor anything that in the least recalls the idea of a League of Nations. Professor L. P. Jacks thinks that the word "League" is the bugbear—he proposes in a letter to the *Times* that we should begin calling it the "Society." But the French have been calling it that since it began; yet this fact has not endeared the organization either to Germany, Italy or the United States. We have to face the fact that several Powers, and Great Powers, are repudiating the idea of corporate action, and insisting on unlimited individual sovereignty. But no other Great Power goes so far in its individualism and repudiation of partnership as the United States. American interests, and American moral principles, so far as one may judge, are offended gravely by Japan's action; but the notion that the United States should present a common front with Great Britain, France or any other State is ruled out as heretical and damnable. Elsewhere, the most individualist and self-seeking nations and Governments form leagues, ententes, and an axis; but you do not catch the United States so compromising its democratic freedom.

I do not think that by changing names or even by altering



parts of the Constitution one can bring the League back into usefulness. Better to leave what stands standing until the world becomes convinced of the necessity for some such machinery of corporate action, as will inevitably happen, though no man can count the cost of that conversion. The League will become a reality when all the Great Powers feel it necessary to their own reasonable safety.

The reason why it failed, as it has failed, was not that Germany, Italy and Japan seceded; only one secession mattered, and that was the initial withdrawal of the most outspoken supporter of its principles. America was so convinced that it could never have need of the League that it left those States which needed it to run the business. Great Britain for several years felt itself taking part in a philanthropic enterprise, for the good of other people. It was real to France from the first because France felt the need of corporate protection not only for herself but for the new States whose existence she was concerned to preserve. The League of the future, the efficient League, will be based on such realistic considerations.

For the moment, what remains of it does in some measure cumber the ground. Take the case of Palestine. The situation there is controlled—so far as it can be said to be controlled—by British forces; what matters more, it is governed by British promises which, unfortunately, cannot all be kept, since the promise to Jews contradicts the promise to Arabs. But because Great Britain holds Palestine under mandate from the League, the matter cannot be dealt with by British statesmanship alone. Decision is urgently needed, because throughout Europe the plight of the Jewish race becomes worse monthly. A Commission has proposed a solution which means giving to each of the parties half or a part of what they aspire to; and naturally enough, both repudiate it. But Dr. Weizmann, for the Jews, holds tenaciously to the principle, which it offers, of creating in Palestine a purely Jewish State, fully autonomous. That principle appears to answer to the world's need which is that Jewish energy and Jewish wealth shall be utilized to create a home for the Jews. People doubted whether the thing could be done; no one doubts now—least of all the Arabs—that it can be done, in Palestine.

**A Jewish  
Homeland**

No other place has the necessary attraction, the historic appeal. As a British Dominion, a Hebrew State in Palestine would be a strength to the British Empire and an addition to the prosperity of the world—and to such Arabs as live within that State. The Arab world is wide, and much of it is now under Arab rule, in consequence of a war in which Arabs fought with decisive backing from Europe; backing so powerful that Europe is entitled to a decisive voice in the disposal of Palestine. The need of the Jews is also the need of Europe—the need of countries like France and England which generously keep an open door for the expatriated; the need also of Poland for instance and such other States as feel that they have in their territory too large a Jewish element.

If the League were capable to-day of decisive action, if too, it possessed authority, then the matter could and should be settled by the League in the interests of Europe and of humanity. But as things are, the only possibility of decisive action rests with Great Britain, and the only shape which that action can take is to remove all restriction on Jewish immigration, with the avowed intention of letting the Jews make it *de facto* a Jewish country, if they can, by superior energy, brains and in the end by superior numbers. If that intention were now made plain, Arab interests could be bought out where it was necessary; but many Arabs would find it their interest to acquire prosperity under the direction of Jewish enterprise. All that is needed is to give opportunity for legitimate penetration and infiltration, the Jews buying and working their way in; with a clear understanding that, if and when the Jews become a majority in the country as a whole, the government of the country will become Jewish. But to go on as at present with no clearly defined policy, with a nominal enforcement of law in which neither Jew nor Arab can see the expression of his own native will is making the worst of both worlds.

Australia's celebration at the finish of her third half-century sets one thinking. A continent rather than a country is given over to seven and a half millions of the English-speaking race;

<p><b>The</b> <b>Australian</b> <b>Type</b></p>	<p>racially mixed from all the stocks in these islands, but with no competing element from other lands—and none from its own. In New Zealand the</p>
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Maori factor is not negligible ; in South Africa besides the two rival strains, English and Dutch, there is the coloured man ; in Canada the French represent the oldest colonial type that is now in the British Commonwealth ; so old that they have evolved a folk song. *Habitant* chants go back to the time when France was writing “ *J’aime mieux ma mie, o gué, j’aime mieux ma mie* ”—where as Molière said, “ *la passion parle toute pure.* ” Those refrains are heard through nearly all that has been written best in English about Canada, and one may say that Canada has a voice for us. So has South Africa, charged with dramatic echoes of conflict and the clash of strong personalities—Boer and Briton—both of whom were determined to bring their vision of South Africa home to the world’s imagination. New Zealand, I confess, leaves my imagination indifferent ; one is only aware of a small but competent community, living in conditions of climate not wholly unlike our own. But Australia is perplexing. All the environment is almost fantastically different, and yet the conditions are such that the English race grows to magnificent physical development—swift and strong. Australian troops had no superior on the Western front ; some good judges would say they had no equals. By general consent, they were different from English, Scots, Welsh, Irish or Canadains ; but how should one define the difference ? What do any of us who have not visited Australia know about Australians—except indeed from watching their cricketers ? That was not by any means without instruction ; we learnt that Australia, playing the most quintessentially English of games with great dexterity and determination, refused to be bound by English traditions. To pull a ball from the offside to the leg was not merely counted bad play, it was bad form ; and so your accomplished English batsman could be relied on to place the ball only where it was proper. When the Australians began to hook it to an undefended leg side, the stroke was thought ugly and ungentlemanlike. But since the Australians went on doing it, and scoring fours very fast, England conformed. England allowed its opinion to be changed on a question of what was, or was not, cricket ; and only the very old can remember the superstition which schoolboys sixty years ago were brought up to accept.



No respecting of persons, no respecting of tradition ; the Australians see themselves like that. But one has a feeling that it will be better for them when they have engendered a tradition of their own with its binding force. They need someone to make songs for them ; and the need was made plain when, in deference to Australia's desire, Adam Lindsay Gordon was given a niche and a bust in the Poets' Corner of the Abbey. Yet of his short life—thirty-seven years—less than half was spent in Australia ; and none of his boyhood. He had lived the life of the country, a mounted policeman when there were still bushriders to hunt ; then for a couple of years, member of parliament ; but, above all, and always a horsebreaker and steeplechase rider. The best of his verses comes when they give the thrill of bold horsemanship or the pulsing beat of hoofs ; but nothing that is essential fixes the life of them to Australia. Unbookish men would like them, and like them for what is best in them ; but Kipling has shown that unbookish men will like even more work that has the same qualities (and not the same defects) of slack nerved expression.

Australia is still waiting for her poet. Even in prose I do not know that anything has brought Australia, or any part of it, home to me. Yet Miss Helen Simpson, who writes so well, writes with a feeling for the growth, the evolution of Australia's people and makes me begin to feel that they are not just merely Englishmen, Scots and Irishmen at the other side of the world.

A little volume issued from the Latin Press discloses a surprising vein of interest in a most remarkable man. Sir Basil Blackett certainly took a first class in *Literae Humaniores* at

*Lit. Hum.*  
**and Finance** Oxford before he went to the Treasury, but throughout his career men associated his name with the mastery of finance. Few would have suspected him of an " absorption in Byzantine Greek " which led him into translating devotional poems by St. Gregory Nazianzen, while he was still Controller of Finance in Whitehall. Later, in the months before his death (a motor-crash cut him short at fifty-four), he had turned to versions from mediæval Latin—at a guess, under an impulse given by Miss Helen Waddell, who writes a foreword about him with more than her usual seductive enthusiasm—and that is not saying a little

She lets us know that Sir Basil inherited the taste for monkish literature from his father, a parson, who called his sons after early Fathers of the Church : Basil of Cæsarea, who in a sense stood sponsor for the future Finance Minister, was a friend of St. Gregory's. I give first an example from the Greek—St. Gregory's evening prayer :

“ True Word of God, I have been false to Thee  
 For whom this day was hallowed, thine to be.  
 I gave my promise, true was my intent  
 But on this path and that astray I went  
 Not all-illuminèd, Saviour, by Thy light ;  
 Besmirched, bewildered, kneel I here to-night ;  
 Give me Thy light again, Christ, make my darkness bright.”

But here now is the opening of a hymn for the Burial of the Dead from Prudentius, who like St. Gregory, lived through most of the fourth century :

“ Now, Earth, to thy keeping we send him  
 In thy fostering bosom we leave him.  
 'Tis a man ; to thy care we commend him ;  
 He is dead, he is noble ; receive him.  
 In this body a soul had his dwelling  
 By the breath of his Maker was fashioned  
 In wisdom and knowledge excelling  
 For the Christ and His Kingdom impassioned.”

Miss Waddell says of these translations that one is “ among the supreme things of the kind ” and I take her to refer to this superb lyric which sweeps harmoniously in nine stanzas to restful close. But how extraordinary it is to find such a man, so completely trained and versed in concrete science, setting his brain to reproduce in English Hildebert's Hymn to the Trinity, which strings with a passion of hurry into short rhyming lines the subtleties of One in Three.

“ Coeternal evermore  
 Neither after nor before ”—

Altogether between these translators and Miss Waddell's tribute to her friend, we have here a singular side-light on a man whose untimely death robbed the Commonwealth of a rich asset. All knew that. But how many guessed that there was behind that “ ruthless, logical, scientific brain,” “ a sceptic apprehended by God”.

Not many, even of those who have been in some degree “ scholars,” keep up with Latin and Greek through the medium

of mediæval literature. It would be interesting to know how many of them continue to read the classics habitually. I remember being taken in Italy by an Italian acquaintance (he and I spoke French) to call on a charming and erudite old priest, who unfortunately knew neither French nor English. I could read Latin as easily as French, but I had never ventured myself in speaking it and so stood tongue-tied—too shy to attempt what should have been natural. There had been a defect in my education. We could of course have adjusted our pronunciation to some sort of common denominator; but I remained hypnotized by the illusion that Latin is a “dead language.” People should be taught that it is not; it still has living uses, by no means only in ritual.

Youths with a Catholic upbringing are more easily aware. Some time ago, while the big electric works on the Shannon were in progress, a farmer’s son of my acquaintance saw at a cross-roads outside Limerick a group obviously of foreigners obviously in doubt as to their way; and he stopped with the kind notion of offering them a lift—for he was driving. But they had no English, he no German, and he could not ascertain whether they wanted to go into the town or to the works or the river. Then a brain wave struck him and he said *Quo vadis*? Instantly one replied *Ad Limerick*. So they got their lift. I doubt if any scholar, of my year, would have had that bright idea. Latin was learnt as a task, and also, in many cases, for pleasure. We certainly got great enjoyment out of mouthing our passages in Virgil, in a pronunciation in which Virgil assuredly would have scarcely recognized himself. But I believe that English verse recited by an Indian student who has not lived in England sounds strange to English ears. That does not mean that he has not a sincere enjoyment of the poetry, and if I were teaching English to an Indian, I would say, ‘Hurry on to get a grip on the meaning, *enunciation*, do not worry over details of grammar, and above all do not be delayed in your career by questions of pronunciation. You will probably never get these quite right; but you can open up your channels of communication with what the human mind has stored in another language, keeping its own peculiar quality and value’.



# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## LIVING AND WRITING

By V. S. PRITCHETT

**THE SUMMING UP**, by W. Somerset Maugham. *Heinemann*. 10s. 6d.

**THE GATHERED**, by W. B. Maxwell. *F Hutchinson*. 10s. 6d.

This book is Mr. Maugham's stock-taking. He has been writing, spending himself all his life—what has he left in the bank? Confession? No, Mr. Maugham has none of Mr. Wells' urgent need to rush out and tell the world nothing with the breathlessness of a cosmic news review. Reminiscence? Mr. Maugham is not a bore. What he has got left is a collection of ideas, hitherto unsorted, of a professional nature, and *The Summing Up* is an account of how he came by them. His own beginnings, the conditions of his profession, the judgment of critics, his experience of the theatre, views on prose style, the necessity of money, the shrewdness of the planning of his career carried out with a financier's exactitude, the necessary if disappointing discovery of the filing for future use of his own imitations, and so on to the problem of the meaning of life itself as it has been variously propounded to him by philosophers, the religious, the scientists and aesthetes—such are the lines of his book. Where others edge round the well-worn track of their failures and successes, Mr. Maugham has—though with far less warmth and happiness in his curiosity than Montaigne—taken up the position of spectator of himself. Personal, sceptical and never intimate, he hides an injured and sensitive heart behind the fluent mind of the impervious man of the world.

I have read his book twice, the first time because he is the most readable writer living, one whose performance is always so striking for its smoothness in the first canter round the ring; and the second time because, deeply interested though I was, I could hardly remember a line he had written from page to page. He is the least natural of writers; nothing strikes out with the uncouthness of nature, therefore nothing sticks. That clear, colourless style, modelled so assiduously on Swift and Dryden with its odd, occasional lapses into the English of the gossip columns, had flowed through my mind without leaving a single strong impression.

Somewhere he remarks shrewdly that tolerance in some people is merely the measure of their indifference, and I am never sure, after any of Mr. Maugham's books, which of these characteristics is his. That he should savage his characters, as if at first sight his reaction to their originals in life had been a displeased recoil, is not of great importance. We have few enough hard-headed writers in England. In France, where Mr. Maugham is more at home, they do not find a cerebral attitude to character either offensive or uninteresting, and this trait is refreshing in English letters. Malice, sardonic wit, the gaiety of an alert intelligence and the cool scrutiny of the disinterested moralist, are intellectual pleasures which may not have upon us the effect of the greatest imaginative literature, but they do stand out with some well-groomed distinction from the honest sweat which beads the rosy brows of most English novelists. Where Mr.

Maugham falls short is in this: his indifference does lead him to be merely a commentator on character, and the field of his comment is very limited. Preoccupied like so many of his generation seem to have been with the misleading evidence of convention, he has confined himself to debunking the conventional view.

This is an important point because no subject is more interesting to the English middle class. Hence the popularity which has come to a writer who might otherwise have been labelled highbrow and have been unpopular; hence too, Mr. Maugham's dislike of the highbrow writers, his insensibility to Pater, his disapproval of the cultivated, his discomfort before the unpopular. It is true that there is always enough highbrow cant; but there is a no-brow cant, too. It is nonsense to say that a writer who does not become popular in his own time will never be heard of in future generations. Again, his addiction to the comedies and tragedies of convention has led Mr. Maugham to underrate the private sensibility of the English. The Bible may have been wholly bad for latter-day English prose, as he says; but only on the assumption that the English had lost their native romanticism, and only if by the Authorized Version he means such things as the Song of Solomon and not the masterly simplicity of the stories of Ruth or of Samson and Delilah. The best of Hazlitt was a marriage of the conversational simplicity of the eighteenth century, which Mr. Maugham admires, with the warm traditional romanticism of our race; and if one is to distribute blame for the constipated state of English prose to-day, I am not sure that we do not owe it to a debased aping of the Augustans. More than one young writer has had to work Addison out of his system.

Among Mr. Maugham's literary judgments there is plenty to quarrel about—not, indeed, with disapproval but with interest. Some spring from

his rather ninety-ish view of artist as a detached person. Politely he says, ruin creative writers, they ruin Swift or Defoe? Journalists ruin, too. Did it ruin Defoe, who wrote Robinson Crusoe after a lifetime of newspapers; or Dickens or Thackeray? One suspects the detachment that is put up this imaginary figure of the perfect artist. Is it detachment, or is it resignation, an affected indifference? Maugham himself has always been worried about the supposed incompatibility between living and writing, much so that on the same page the following passages appear:

"I have never wished to be nothing but a writer; I have wished to live completely."

and

"I have never been able to persuade myself that anything else (besides writing) mattered."

It is an odd comment to come from the enemy of the aesthetes and the highbrows.

*The Summing Up* is not the book of a happy man. Under its superficial self-possession it reveals a curious rootlessness, pathos and bewilderment, but these are kept in their place, in view of sight, by Mr. Maugham's warring pride in his craft, in the accomplished planning of his career and the calm acceptance of his limitations.

Mr. Maxwell's book calls for little comment. It is a conventional volume of literary memories, but very readable, lively in anecdote and fresh in its picture of the comfortably off world at the turn of the century. Somehow he and Mr. Maugham agree that the present practice whereby novelists review novels is a bad one. So it is. But it is due to that decline of professional criticism to the level of publicity-writing which Mr. Maugham notes, but which Mr. Maxwell, in his kindly desire to see everyone do what he has not observed. Reviewing of novels by novelists is not cricket but is criticism, practically the only criticism there is in the commercialized literary world of to-day.

## THE INDIAN OUTLOOK

BY L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS.

**INDIAN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHY**  
by Betty Heimann. *George Allen & Unwin.* 5s.

**MUTAMA BUDDHA**, by Iqbal Singh.  
*Boriswood.* 15s.

**SIDE INDIA**, by Halide Edib.  
*George Allen & Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

**S HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER**, by K. M. Panikkar.  
*Oxford University Press.* 18s.

It is a matter of observation that peoples are the creatures of their philosophies—sometimes even of their philosophers. Our modern dictators might receive with mixed feelings the assertion that each, in his way, is the embodiment of a Platonic conception, but such an assertion is not wholly unfounded. One of the most interesting phenomena of our times is the tendency to Western ideas in politics, in science, and in art, to break away from the course consistently pursued since the time of the Greek sophists. Western history has in the main been the product of the view that "man is the measure of all things;" and that knowledge is primarily derived from the application of the human reason to the analysis of phenomena. Are we now reverting to the older cosmic philosophy of the pre-Aristotelian era, which would reduce the individual judgment to a subordinate position when confronted with a totalitarian philosophy of the universe?

It would be tempting, upon the evidence of these four books, to speculate as to the probability of India's intimate adhesion to either of the rival ideologies which now divide the Western world. But such a tempta-

tion must be resisted; if only because the typically Indian outlook upon man's position in the universe differs so radically from Western conceptions that arguments from analogy lead only to confusion of thought.

In so far as the basis of Indian thought is essentially cosmic, it might appear that the modern reaction against the anthropological view of the universe would tend to bring the West nearer to the East. But in point of fact, India's collectivism and non-individualism, her relativity of values, and her sense of infinity, belong to a different plane; so that whatever may be the apparent convergence between Eastern and Western thought, they will in fact never meet. In her admirable little book, Dr. Heimann, with her original use of philology, elucidates many of the characteristic conceptions of Indian philosophy. She points out that Indian thought is fundamentally synthetical, depending upon the appreciation of the harmonious functioning of each portion of the great cosmic order. The manner of this functioning is dynamic, a perpetual birth and re-birth which is as true of the gods themselves as of men and other manifestations of life. It is this dynamic principle which underlies the often misunderstood conception of *Maya*. *Maya* does not signify the illusory character of the universe, as apparent to the senses. This universe is "real" enough empirically; but since every element in it is an emanation from the mass of primeval matter into which it will eventually be re-absorbed, its "reality" is transient, being subject to the operation of the cosmic laws.



It is these same laws which govern the universe of which man is a part; and which, far more than the State or even his fellow-men, control his status within his environment. Man's duty is thus neither to the State, nor to his fellow-men, but to the whole of creation—a conception so wide that in practice it may operate to blur the obligations which in the West are derived from the narrower conception of civic duty. At the same time, the thought of India is essentially practical and empirical in its operation; reluctant to generalize; and distrustful of theory. Deep-rooted in the Indian mind is the idea that discussion is the most effective of all means of research; and that words themselves possess an efficacy which is an integral part of the thing for which they stand. The practical importance of these facts will be obvious to anyone who observed the difficulties experienced by Indians and Englishmen in the course of the Round Table Conferences in arriving at clear understandings.

Mr. Iqbal Singh, though a master of beautiful English, is not adequately equipped either as a historian or as a philosopher. Had he been either, his life of Gautama Buddha would have been as valuable as it is interesting. His defective equipment leads him to suggest in all seriousness that the concept of survival and re-birth was foisted into Gautama's doctrine by his interpreters; and his assessment of Gautama's position is vitiated by his failure to appreciate the strict orthodoxy of Gautama's views in such matters as the subordination of deities to the cosmic order and the futility of endeavouring to explain the ultimate origin of the universe instead of comprehending the order of its manifestations. Mr. Iqbal Singh's approach to his subject is fundamentally Western; a characteristic he shares with Halide Edib. Her penetrating study of modern India—a very important book—is remarkable in its objectivity and delicacy of perception. The careful critic will discern in her pages, as in Mr. Iqbal Singh's, some minor historical errors; and will wish that she also

had provided herself with a background of traditional Hindu thought. In the view of the present writer, she underestimates the enormous vitality of Hindu culture; and attaches excessive importance to the influence, which may be quite transitory, of Western materialism as an element in India's destinies. This is the more strange view of her recognition that so essentially Western a culture as that of Islam has, in India, been profoundly modified by Hindu contacts, while leaving them almost unaffected. As a consequence, although her observations are careful, her conclusions are nebulous.

Mr. Panikkar's book is of more than ordinary interest; for it provides a vivid picture of the functioning of Hindu Kingship under modern conditions. *Dharma* has been the inspiration of the Maharaja of Bikaner through all his notable activities for his State, his country, and the Commonwealth. A culture which can to-day provide the philosophical outlook of such a figure as His Highness need not entertain any apprehensions as to its own survival.

L. F. RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS

## THE SILENT SOCIAL REVOLUTION

by G. A. N. Lowndes. Oxford University Press. 6s.

In describing the expansion of public education in England and Wales during the last forty years in a small book this is at once exact and readable, Mr. Lowndes has done well. The older generation will find in it clear proof of progress. The younger folk who are naturally and rightly impatient with anything short of Utopia may perhaps see that educational reform, to be useful and popular, must take time. Mr. Lowndes first sketches the position reached by 1895, when elementary schools had been provided for all children under the Act of 1870 and the horrid system of "payment by results" was dropped. Illiteracy was vanishing, but the schools were primitive, and children could leave at eleven, and there was little provision of education

bove Standard VII. The Board did not yet exist. One department looked after the School Boards and the elementary schools, another encouraged some science and art teaching, while the Board of Agriculture subsidized agricultural classes and the Charity Commission kept an eye on the endowed schools. Politically, education was not a live issue. Neither party cared to embitter the feud between the supporter, the Church Schools and the Nonconformists who favoured the rated Board Schools.

Mr. Balfour's Education Act of 1902 changed the whole outlook. Only a resolute and trusted Prime Minister could have piloted so far-reaching a measure to the Statute-book, in defiance of School Boards and Nonconformist consciences and with none too much help from Churchmen. Once that political revolution was effected, the County Councils showed themselves eager to use their new powers to provide elementary, secondary, technical and higher education. Mr. Lowndes suggests with good reason that the generation which had benefited by the elementary schools welcomed the promise of still better things for their children, whatever politicians might think or say. Under the new Board of Education, with Sir Robert Morant at its head, progress was thenceforward rapid—so rapid indeed that the average man has not kept pace with it and will be grateful for the author's lucid summary up to the Act of 1936. The development of the elementary schools with their medical service is not more remarkable than the organization of secondary, technical and higher grade, and since the Hadow report of 1926, of "senior" schools which make the educational ladder climbable for the poorest children who have talent. Mr. Lowndes describes the recent advances most clearly and helpfully. Older readers who know anything of our present schools can testify that the contrast which he draws between the children of to-day and those of 1895 is not exaggerated. A silent social revolution has indeed taken place, and

the country is infinitely the better for it. The schools have raised the standard of public health, have broken down the old barriers of caste and have made for decency and order in the roughest districts. The intellectual results cannot so easily be assessed as yet but must already be considerable. We need not now fear comparison with any other country in respect of education, though forty years ago we were very far behind.

The only forbidding feature of Mr. Lowndes' fascinating book is the series of folding graphs which he has mistakenly included.

EDWARD G. HAWKE.

**POTEMKIN**, by George Soloveyitchik.  
*Thornton Butterworth.* 18s.

This publication is accompanied by a document which is apparently designed, by gentle promptings, to enable the least intelligent of critics to write an adequate review without the necessity for any knowledge of his subject or any but the most cursory perusal of the book. It is hard to believe that a series of stereotyped comments can be either helpful or flattering to the author; and the puff in question will have done an ill service to anyone who has thereby felt relieved from the pleasant task of reading this interesting and well-balanced work.

Potemkin constitutes an almost perfect subject for a biographer who can handle an intricate historical subject without either Teutonic dullness or Transatlantic flummery. The subject is vast: but it is illuminated by the dazzling personality of the hero himself. The great historical events unroll their sequence before a background of incredible extravagance, splendour, and eccentricity. Perhaps by reason of his origin, Mr. Soloveyitchik excels in dealing with the character of Catherine the Great and the strange habits of her aristocracy. Among so much that is scarcely credible, it would have been easy to exaggerate: among so much that is barbaric, it would have been easy to lament and moralize.



Mr. Soloveytschik lets the facts speak for themselves. His picture of the life and behaviour of the Russian nobles of the eighteenth century is very vivid: however reprehensible the state of affairs may have been, it is extremely amusing.

Potemkin himself, apart from being born into the officer class, was entirely a self-made man. At the age of twenty-three he played a minor part in the *coup d'état* by which Catherine seized the throne. At the age of thirty-four he became Catherine's lover. From that time until his death, he remained and was recognized as the most powerful man in Russia, during a period which extended from the beginning of the American Revolution to the beginning of the French Revolution.

Mr. Soloveytschik is very much concerned to prove, what no other writer has so far advanced, that Potemkin and Catherine were secretly married. This may be an interesting genealogical fact, but it throws no light one way or the other on their relations. The Empress had had one husband already, whom she had put away without much ado. Whatever it was that bound her to Potemkin, it was not her respect for the sanctity of the marriage tie. Yet it is astonishing that he and he alone succeeded in maintaining his political influence over her after the physical union had been severed. At an early stage in their connection, he had the sense to see that for two such highly temperamental people, the bed-chamber was the worst of all possible places for the transaction of the affairs of an Empire. Thereafter he kept Catherine supplied with a relay of lovers, chosen and when necessary removed by himself; while she allowed and even encouraged him to pursue affairs with a multitude of women, and most notably with his own five nieces.

That such a relation should last for long would be strange in any circumstances: but it is amazing when, as their letters show, they were to the very end, and on both sides equally, madly in love. It lasted for one reason only. In her semi-divine position, with her unbounded power, Catherine seldom

came into contact with men who had no private ends to gain. But Potemkin was entirely selfless. He loved her herself, and he loved his country. He was a mystic, deeply absorbed in religion. His worldly possessions and honours were a cause of misery to him; he used to weep over his responsibilities and power, and gambled away his rewards like chaff. The less he sought, the more was given to him: provinces, palaces, commands. He used to demand that as evidences of his mistress' love, but he used them entirely for her service. So also it was to him, who was utterly oblivious of his own personal appearance, that every woman gave her heart.

Such natures are rare and complex. Potemkin baffled even the astute Lord Malmesbury, who mistook him completely as to offer him a bribe. He has a little mystified the painstaking Mr. Soloveytschik, who is not quite convinced of anything beyond the fact that his hero was a genius. His administrative achievements prove that much. But Potemkin was something more unusual still, he was an example of the wholly disinterested man.

CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE

ESCAPE ON SKIS, by Brian Meredith  
*Hurst & Blackett. 12s. 6d.*

The mood of this book, bright, joyous, keen and wholly exhilarating, is well attuned to the subject. Mr. Brian Meredith is a young Canadian who as a journalist dabbled in the subject of ski-ing and became co-editor of the Canada Ski Year Book. He travelled with him 'way down West for a thoroughly enjoyable ski-expedition in the Rockies, then through the sophisticated "dinner-jacket" centres of Switzerland. The two atmospheres are well contrasted, and while the reader will search in vain for instruction, there is scarcely a dull page in a highly personal narrative: the even the compound and unanalysed emotions of this twentieth-century ecstasy are capable of being recaptured in tranquility. There is a pleasant foreword by the Right Hon. L. S. Amery.

W.H.C.



HUNGARY AND HER SUCCESSORS,  
by C. A. Macartney. Oxford  
University Press. 25s.

Perhaps one day this book may serve a real purpose. That is, to act as a collection of evidence and an expert's opinion on the real justification for the often advocated "local revisions" of the frontiers laid down by the Treaty of Trianon. For Mr. Macartney has little patience with so-called "historical rights": real justification of revision, and indeed of the original partition of the Austro-Hungarian territories, as he sees it, is to be found only in the wishes of the peoples concerned, tempered by proper regard for the economic welfare of the majority and the desirability of a firm foundation for the political stability of the area as a whole.

So the propagandists of either side in this eighteen-year-old agitation will not get much ammunition out of Mr. Macartney. To give only one or two little instances: he must have created a mighty annoyance to the Czechs in blotting back to Hungary (power-politics aside) practically the whole of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, even though he underlines severely the necessity for guarantees of autonomy if such a thing came to pass; he must have annoyed Rumanian propagandists by exploding the validity of their claim to a frontier line West of Oradea Mare, and by deciding for a line, roughly, following the watershed of the Bihar and Meszes ranges behind the strip of plain at present occupied by Rumania; he must have dealt a blow to Hungarian sentiments by arguing conclusively against any partition of Transylvania in favour of the Székely districts returning to Hungary, and to Hungarian delusions in respect of the Croats by his very definite account of the real state of Croat national sentiment.

In short, Mr. Macartney pays no attention at all to chauvinistic claims: indeed, in the historical sections of this book, he deals as severely with Magyar arrogance of superiority and all its consequences as ever did *Scotus Viator* to whom he refers very often in due

acknowledgment of his authority on the subject.

But the day when these questions of revision have to be considered practically is not yet even in sight on the horizon of politics. Quite apart from this book's value as a fresh and dispassionate estimate of the validity of the claims which went to the drafting of the Treaty of Trianon, and quite apart from its immense potential value if revision ever did come to be discussed, the material on which the author bases his conclusions makes up a volume of the greatest interest on the present state of the peoples of the former Hungarian kingdom—the effects of the great partition. Mr. Macartney is extremely thorough, sacrifices nothing in his writing to effect (though he contrives little effects of his own occasionally) and has made an extremely complete survey of that fascinating patchwork of striving peoples in the middle Danube basin. The astonishing thing is that he has been able to accomplish the work in the three years since he produced his last book on *National States and National Minorities*, even though work on that must have brought him into contact with many problems of this latter book. He has included sections not only on the economics of the various regions, the effects of the sudden revolution of their markets and supplies, the economic policies of the Succession States and of post-War Hungary herself, but he even attempts to gauge the political feeling among the minorities and the majorities. (This is a far more difficult task than it sounds in semi-illiterate countries, where the vociferous sections of populations are not necessarily representative of the general state of opinion.)

Transylvania, for example, shows an administration rotten to the core, corrupt and backward to a degree scarcely imaginable, a population with elements of regional cohesion in it, an economy that has been exploited by the Regat, a natural richness of resources which has been a gain to the central and eastern regions and a loss to the western districts. Yugoslavia shows the

bitterest national strivings on a background of a richness of soil and abundance of resources out of which no shifting of markets has been able to mask the utter misery of extreme economic distress. Slovakia, Ruthenia and the Burgenland are similarly illustrated, and the detail is both fascinating and essential to the student of the region. On the data available (not always very rich) Mr. Macartney has written a sane and scholarly book such as those countries of argument and propaganda and half-truth thoroughly deserve.

RALPH. MURRAY.

**GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH**, by M. Willson Disher. *Bell*. 15s.

This is a history of the life of Astley's Amphitheatre, which used to stand at the junction of Westminster Bridge and Stangate, and of those vivid striving showmen who were managers and entertainers there. For a dramatic critic to write a book without one word of criticism is a rare achievement. The method is research, with plenty of time allowed for jolly anecdote. Mr. Disher tacitly realizes that he is not dealing with an artistic form but with the earthy though richly-humoured career of popular entertainment. Nor yet is his book a social document. It is the chronicle of a vigorous fragment of nineteenth-century life.

It opens with Philip Astley, who ran away from a Staffordshire carpentry bench to fight the French in the Prussian alliance at Emsdorf in George II.'s last year, gain the rank of sergeant-major at nineteen, become the most famous horseman and showman in London, and undertake the conquest of France again, in a different sense and with the skill and grace of his son to help, just before the Revolution. Mr. Disher in his zeal pardonably exaggerates the extent of English yeast in the ferment that blew up the Bastille; his theory is more interesting than persistent representation of Napoleon in circuses later increased the contempt for the restored Bourbon and Orleans monarchies in this country and dis-

satisfaction with them in France. Astley must have been a character exactly portrayable by Mr. W. Fields. He has bequeathed a host of remarks, of which "These here horses eat most vociferously" is the best.

Other figures parade in an array of costume: Andrew Ducrow, who could perform any act or write any equestrian piece, and who made while watching rehearsal of *Hamlet* that immortal observation about "cutting the dial" and coming to the 'osses"; "Napoleon" Gomersal, marching night after night to Moscow and Waterloo; "Methuselah" Widdicomb, an aristocrat even among ring-masters; dazzler Louisa Woolford, whose picture inspired more collectors than an entire revue chorus; Adah Isaac Menken, who took her husbands by the season, rode Mazeppa in that perennial piece, and won a wager from Rossetti by calling on Swinburne and stopping the night. The entry of Lord George Sanger and some of his travelling troupe like Pimpino brings to most of us present memories; but Astley's had closed forever in 1893.

The narrative is rapid, colourful, painstaking, objective, never psychological. Without being callous, Mr. Disher does not dwell on disaster in close chapters with it; destructive fires and grave injuries are ingredients of the mixture, not banquets for moralists. Thus he escapes the ban which has sucked in many writers about the stage, who present fun-makers always as figures of tragedy, killed by their sport by the gods. He does not overlook that quiet courage by which Astley, Ducrow, Sanger, built up their ventures when hope had often to serve as cash, rivalry with other theatres was a biting spur, and projects were caged by entertainment law. This is a picture of old London as Boz and Thackeray knew it. Oranges in the Old Vic gallery, vegetable barrows in the New Cut, are symbols still of the mingled squalor and heartiness that once overspread the entire Surrey side.

ALAN PHILLIPS.



**SPANISH TESTAMENT**, by Arthur Koestler. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.

**CATALONIA INFELIX**, by E. Allison Peers. *Methuen*. 10s. 6d.

**SPANISH REHEARSAL**, by Arnold Lunn. *Hutchinson*. 10s. 6d.

**WHY SPAIN FIGHTS ON**, by Louis Fischer. *Union of Democratic Control*. 6d.

The Spanish struggle has been too much presented to English readers as a clash of two rival ideologies which bear scant relation to the real forces, complex and haphazard, at work in the peninsula. There are, however, signs at the day of books revealing the "truth about Spain" by authors who themselves only began to explore that truth towards 1937 is almost over.

Of the books here reviewed, Mr. Koestler's best exemplifies this realist tendency, and is the most valuable. It devotes, it is true, several chapters to the origins of the civil war, but it is in the whole an accurate exposition of what follows, or perhaps inaugurates, in present fashion, by rightly stressing the importance of the agricultural problem. While agreeing with Mr. Koestler's main thesis, I feel bound to point out one or two exaggerations or inaccuracies. Thus, it is misleading to put the blocking of Agrarian Reform in 1933 to "a highly organized plan of sabotage on the part of the big landowners" without mentioning the landowners' contention that the higher scale of wages imposed made the working of arable land uneconomic. It would have been enough to have charged the Spanish governing caste with inertia and mulishness, without accusing it of a "policy of blackmail" difficult to prove. Again, the number of political prisoners after the rising of October, 1934, was given by left-wing fanatics as 30,000—not 40,000.

But *Spanish Testament* is more than justified by the chapters describing the fall of Málaga and the author's subsequent imprisonment under sentence of death. As the only foreign journalist

to remain in Málaga, Mr. Koestler was in a unique position to observe the incompetence of the defending command, the entry of Italian troops, and the summary mass executions which followed. His own experiences in the condemned cell, though their interest is chiefly personal, furnish a valuable side-light on insurgent methods, and particularly on their treatment of journalists.

Professor Allison Peers works briefly over the history of Catalonia before coming to a more detailed review of recent developments seen from the standpoint which he adopted in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and which is summed up in the following lines :

"For five months (i.e., February-July, 1936) the Right looked on helplessly at the complete failure of the Government to deal with the excesses of their extremists or with those of its own. In mid-July the Army could stand it no longer. Garrisons, police and civil guardsmen rose all over Spain; the extremists, responding to the call of the Government and the commands of their own leaders, took arms to resist them."

## BOOK BARGAINS

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**Ata Ullah.** *The Co-operative Movement in the Punjab*. (1937 published 16/-).

**C. B. Purden.** *The Perfect Master, the Life of Shir Meher Baba*. (1937 published 12/6).

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The statement is at once confusing and too simple. It attaches "extremists" to both sides, then rallies them all to the Government. It suggests to the uninformed reader an Olympian army whereas the real army was deeply involved in, and partly responsible for, the political unrest preceding the "Movement."

But the book will prove useful as a factual account of events in Catalonia up to the middle of 1937. Two of the author's conclusions seem questionable: first, that it would have been possible to restrain the violent reaction of the Catalan people after they had overcome what they believed to be an attack on their dearest liberties made not only by the Army but by all the Right-wing forces, including the Church; secondly, that a victory of the Left in the present war would mean the extinction of Catalan hopes of autonomy.

With Mr. Arnold Lunn we leave the journalist's trained observation and the Hispanic specialist's reasoned narrative and enter a realm of pure fantasy. *Spanish Rehearsal* has little relevance to any Spain that exists or has existed. It is animated by a strong Catholic anti-Communist bias, and its author appears to see in any supporter of the Government an enemy of Western civilization. His material is drawn from a three-week tour of Franco territory under the guidance of insurgent press officers, and the writings of a number of English newspaper correspondents, together with publicists whose competence in Spanish affairs had so far gone unrecognized. Mr. Lunn is a polemical writer of no mean ability. It is a pity that he has wasted his virtuosity by barking so agilely up the wrong tree.

In conjunction with *Spanish Rehearsal* should be read Mr. Fischer's pamphlet. Written with strong Left-wing bias, it supplies the answer to many of Mr. Lunn's charges. It, again, has the defect of over-simplifying the issue, but it contains much reliable, though selected, information.

GEOFFREY BRERETON.

## THE PASQUIER CHRONICLES, Georges Duhamel. Dent. 10s. 6d.

The French novel is frequently slight in matter as in bulk, but *Pasquier Chronicles*, first published in their five parts in the *Mercure France*, becomes a veritable omnibus with the inclusion in the English translation of Books IV and V. It picks up its passengers in 1890 and it soon clear that Laurent, his father, mother and four brothers and sisters are in for a hard buffeting as they bump down the years, escaping with difficulty immediately to be caught by another; emerging into the spacious prospect of the twentieth century with the middle-aged father only just qualified as a medical practitioner struggling to bring up a family according to notions stamped by his eccentric individualism into a background of bourgeois convention.

"Come, come, sir, put on your hat, do I go about showing my knees? And for a moment one sees Raymond Pasquier as a remonstrative Johnson figure expressing himself to hat-wearing bald-heads with the same force as openness which gain him the respect of his family, his landlord and a whole warren of flat-dwellers in the *impasse Vandamme*. Stability is there in his mother, a resourceful, courageous and unselfish woman, who patiently endures the agony of waiting for a legacy which is tied up at Havre, a town so much in the minds of the family that one day at school Laurent replies to a question from his geography master by saying, "Havre, monsieur, oh, Havre is where the lawyer lives."

The author never lingers unnecessarily on any single phase of the Pasquier saga. Incident crowds on incident and the canvas is filled in with such detail and colour that one cannot afford to skip any of the 850 pages of translation which seldom falters in rendering that vivid but delicate treatment of the commonplace which is the special virtue of Georges Duhamel. Yet the Pasquiers who are made to live with such vigour and depth of emotion

their everyday life are an unfailing source of surprise. Raymond especially a somewhat uncomfortable father to be," is the opinion of Justin Weill, Laurent's Jewish friend. The remark is justified when the complaint that too much water is being used rouses Raymond to burying an enormous copper in the main supply pipe just to give the landlord "something real to worry about."

That is the reaction of a highly individualized type of Frenchman in Paris of thirty years ago. (His modern counterpart has a rather different approach. He believes in the effectiveness of unions and sit-down strikes.) Laurent and his friends are younger members of that generation, to which, it seems, could tell the older nothing or two about companies that are getting up for the exploitation of incandescent gas. But Laurent lives on hopes which prove almost as poor an investment as his father's shares in the *Granda-Finska*. An experiment is made in working a printing press on a communal basis in the suburbs of Paris. The group is in general agreement with one of their number, Senac, who detests the Clemenceau régime, convinced that another war is coming (this is 1906) and asks one thing of society, "that we shall damn well be at in peace."

But "mutual peace and toleration" is doomed to failure even within the limits of this society. Hard individual effort gives way to pottering and ineffective work. One feels that Raymond's daughter, Cécile, a genius of a pianist who has been practising at the behest of an admiring tutor and has now on fame is perhaps the answer to those who would substitute communal endeavour for intensive individual work. And she like the rest of them, Joseph and Laurent too, are held fast by family ties. It is in revealing their loves, quarrels and worries, inter-related as these are shown to be, that the author excels. For although one may know the Paris of the Ritz Bar, the Opera and Auteuil, or again the life of the

Boulevard Montparnasse and the student haunts around the Luxembourg and the Boul' Mich', it is only one who is himself a Pasquier who could draw so fine a picture of a Parisian family as Georges Duhamel has done. The trials of these people have given them strength and confidence to withstand any shock which may come to their country whether from an internal or external source.

MICHAEL LANGLEY.

**CASTLE CORNER**, by Joyce Cary.  
*Gollancz. 8s. 6d.*

**STRANGERS**, by Claude Houghton.  
*Collins. 8s. 6d.*

**THE BROTHERS**, by H. G. Wells.  
*Chatto & Windus. 3s. 6d.*

**THIS MAN MURRAY**, by William Corcoran.  
*Dent. 7s. 6d.*

Each of these novels is well worth reading, and taken together they represent most of the merits and the failings of contemporary fiction. Mr. Joyce Cary continues the spacious and exuberant chronicle of the last century, Mr. Claude Houghton writes in the romantic psychological manner that matured in the post-war period, Mr. Wells frankly uses the novel as a clumsy but engaging set-piece to carry the Wellsian fireworks, and Mr. Corcoran's medium is the neo-simplicity of the younger Americans.

Mr. Cary's *Castle Corner* portrays the landed gentry and the peasantry of the Victorian age against a background of Ireland, England and West Africa. It is an elaborate panorama in which fresh characters continually appear, and the fecundity of Mr. Cary's portraiture is delightful. In the Irish scenes Mr. Cary displays some of Dostoevsky's skill in rendering the whole dynamic movement of a community, a comparison which is heightened by the "Russian" relationship between the gentry and their servants. Subsequently the book seems to lack an inner core of action. The centre of gravity is continually shifting. Secondary and tertiary characters are over-elaborated, the book loses momentum, and the whole narra-



tive breaks up into an episodic miscellany. What lingers in the memory is the brilliance of single isolated scenes, when Mr. Cary comes to a standstill and distils a haunting poetic quality from some small incident. *Castle Corner* is a rich and abundant material, sufficient for half a dozen novels, which diffuses from its structural defects into a string of exquisite sketches; but the maturity, the objective penetration and the lively feeling of Mr. Cary's style give the whole book an uncommon distinction. Incidentally, when *Castle Corner* is reprinted, the wholesale muddle over inverted commas should be corrected and Mr. Cary might reconsider twenty pounds as the six-months weight of a "small" and "very thin" baby.

By comparison with Mr. Cary, Mr. Houghton's prose is villainous. Neither his eye nor his ear seems to have had any part in the writing of *Strangers*. His idiom is grey and lifeless, and there is no action which has any significance in itself. Mr. Houghton's drama is a reflex on the other side of action, beginning at the point where reflection supersedes objective behaviour. The plot is the simple one of a business-man seducing a mannequin, which Mr. Houghton transposes wholly into the subjective world of the man. It makes an interesting psychological study, and Mr. Houghton does at times succeed in extracting considerable power from his ponderous and turbid methods. Nevertheless, the book is vitiated by the kind of falsity which springs from an imperfect definition of the characters. The wife is a block of wood, the mannequin is pretty well drugged with an overdose of exalted romanticism, and the husband plunges about in a subjective state which lacks any constant validity. A mass of smart chat and unnecessary travelogue swells the book to dropsical dimensions. Yet in spite of everything Mr. Houghton does succeed in holding on grimly to a difficult and interesting theme.

Mr. Wells's *The Brothers* is as contemptuous of its medium as only Mr. Wells can be. Its central theme is a

conversation between the respective leaders of fascist and communist parties during a civil war. The conversation is mounted in a framework of incident so preposterous that of the characters is impelled to "It's as impossible as the *Com of Errors*. It's *Prisoner of Zenda* romance." In other words, *Brothers* is quite pointless unless it is interested in Mr. Wells's thesis about Red-Black politics. This thesis is the apparent differences between two parties are spurious and will disappear if they read H. G. Wells. The argument is developed with characteristic gusto and is not fun unless one believes that Mr. Wells never understood the motivation of human behaviour. The celebrated Wellsian Woman flits about in the background, and altogether the book revives many happy memories of Victorian liberalism.

Mr. Corcoran's *This Man Murray* gives the measure of the distance which divides Mr. Wells from the young novelists of the present day. Murray is an American artisan who sees his fiancée killed, subsequently marries, and then has his home broken up by unemployment. It is a simple story and Mr. Corcoran keeps within the essential simplicity. Unlike Houghton, he does not inflate subjectively; unlike Mr. Wells, he does not use it as a rough scaffold for more portentous utterances. His style is plain, objective, unliterary, deliberately naive, in the manner generally associated with Hemingway. Mr. Corcoran writes with the speaker's voice, and his method will definitely affect an audience accustomed to artificial conventions which have become worn and hackneyed. *Man Murray* has the freshness and novelty of all that is unselfconscious. It is a demotic literature, touched with a quiet sentiment, appealing directly to the heart's simplicity. There is no reason that is not pathological why Fiction should ever descend below this level.

DESMOND HAWKINS



## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

the benefit of our many overseas readers we provide here each month a brief sketch by way of introduction of our contributors to THE FORTNIGHTLY public.

The mould of the nineteenth century, in Great Britain was supreme, is idly dissolving, and in the transition period which must precede the evolution of a new cosmos it is, inevitably, old England that, more than other nations, is at a loss to get her bearings. New problems confront her statesmen, new ideas obtrude themselves upon a bewildered public opinion, and with a new set of ideas rooted in the era of industrial expansion, with her essentially democratic traditions, she finds it peculiarly difficult to adjust her mode of life to the new conditions.

For some pertinent home truths about agriculture, for example, we have recourse this month to Professor R. G. Stapledon, C.B.E., who has made a name for himself by his studies on grassland grasslands, quoted and accepted authoritatively all over the world. Professor Stapledon holds the chair of Agricultural Botany at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and since 1919 he has also been Director of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station. During the War he was appointed Director of the first Seed Testing Station established under the Food Production Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. His views on agricultural policy were set forth cogently in *The Land: Now and To-morrow* (1935).

It is a commonplace to say that in the advent of the aeroplane England has ceased to be an island. Of course the psychological implications of the change have hardly begun to work themselves out. But at the time of Italy's forthright dispositions on the eve of her Abyssinian campaign our Admiralty, at least, had

cause to regret their facile contempt for the air weapon. The strategy of the Mediterranean is indeed transformed, and the ready assistance lent to General Franco's cause by Italy has made plenty of mischief in the Mediterranean. Air-Commodore L. E. O. Charlton, who treats this subject, has a distinguished career behind him: service with distinction (he won the D.S.O.) in the South African War and in the Great War; Air Attaché, British Embassy, Washington, 1919-22; Chief Staff Officer, Iraq Command, 1923-24—when he resigned as a protest against the air control bombing operations. He has come to the front since as the foremost exponent of the air age and its immense implications—in the political, strategic, and psychological spheres. His latest book, *The Menace of the Clouds* (William Hodge) is an admirable primer of the subject. Readers may recall the article he contributed to this REVIEW last June on new aspects of defence—under the title "Gas and Gulls."

Henry Buckley writes with knowledge and sound sense on the political background of the amazing transformation of loyalist Spain. Now correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* in Madrid, he has worked as a journalist in the country for some ten years, and, except for short periods of leave has been on duty in Madrid, Valencia or Barcelona ever since the beginning of the civil war. There are few writing about Spain to-day who know her politics and her people as well as Henry Buckley.

Recent events in Germany have confounded the prophets who assumed



that, whatever the antics of the Party leaders "on top," the *Reichswehr* was the power that held the trumps. Special interest, therefore, attaches to the study of the German Army Officer which we are able to publish—by one who has had unusual opportunities of a close-up view. "Haruspex" was the appellation of the soothsayer of Roman times whose function it was to predict the future from the quality of the entrails of the beasts of sacrifice! He was the counterpart of the "augur," a name not unknown as a *nom de plume* in this review.

Lionel M. Gelber is a Canadian, a former Rhodes scholar at Balliol, who is perturbed, like so many of us, by the ugly and menacing situation in Europe, but who believes that the situation can still be saved if only Britain remains true to her own special rôle as pivot of the European balance of power. Another contributor whom we welcome from the Dominions is Professor F. L. W. Wood, who holds the chair of History at Victoria College, Wellington, New Zealand. His account of the country's progress is highly encouraging to those of us who welcome the twentieth-century phenomenon of the welfare-State.

Like F. L. W. Wood, J. B. Condliffe was born in Australia, and his early teaching experience was, similarly, in New Zealand. He was Professor of Economics at Canterbury College, 1920-26. During the next

decade he held appointments successively as Research Secretary of Institute of Pacific Relations and a member of the Economic Intelligence Section of the League of Nations, Geneva. He is now University Professor of Commerce, London School of Economics, thus being for the first time (except his undergraduate days at Cambridge) domiciled in this country. No more authoritative and unprejudiced witness to the van Zeeland Republic could have been found.

The name of Helen Simpson is known to a wide public, in Australia, where she hailed from originally, in America, and in England. One of her novels, *Boomerang*, obtained the James T. Black Memorial prize in 1932. She is so very much more than a novelist. Among her—admitted—occupations are collecting books on witchcraft and cooking: and out of this strange lore she has given us a delightful commentary on the cookery of Sam Pepys' age.

Montgomery Belgium, essayist and amateur philosopher, takes up the ever-present theme of "propaganda" and shows that one of the salient characteristics of our time is the development of veiled publicity.

Finally, E. R. Sarv pays a belated tribute to one of the vigorous littérateurs of the Baltic which has just celebrated its twentieth anniversary. He is the London representative of the newspaper *Uus Eesti*, Tallinn.



## THE FORTNIGHTLY BAZAAR

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From Our Dumb Friends' League, a society working hard at this moment on the success of the Performing Animals (Regulation) Bill, now before Parliament, we have received some valuable literature. The Bill has been designed to prohibit the entry of any animal for training over the age of six months, thus barring the entry of the animal trained abroad. It is of particular interest to readers of THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW that a staunch supporter of this Bill is Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, formerly Secretary of the Zoological Gardens, and, incidentally, a candidate for the Scottish Universities at the recent by-election. The result of that by-election was not known to us at the time of writing these notes. Readers of Mr. Koestler's recent book, *Spanish Testament* or of Sir Peter's own book, *My House in Malaga* will realize what great weight his opinion carries. Sir Peter has said of performing animals that "there is the greatest possible risk that there has been cruelty, not only in training the animal, but continuous cruelty in keeping the animal up to the mark for these—what may be called—fixed time performances . . ." The main objects of the Bill are to prohibit the training and public exhibition of dogs, seals, monkeys, apes and baboons as well as the animal trained abroad, also to extend to the duly appointed representatives of accredited Humane Societies, the right under the Performing Animals (Regulations) Act, 1925, to inspect premises used for training and to attend performances and exhibition of performing animals and inspect performing animals. Also to make particulars of registration under the Act of 1925 more readily available for public inspection. It is hoped in this way to ensure that in future no animals which may be trained and exhibited as performing animals are so trained or exhibited unless they are born in this country and to provide machinery for ensuring that the objects of the Act of 1925 and of the Bill are fulfilled. Mrs. E. A. Pinto-Leite, who has done magnificent work for her cause as Chairman of the Political Committee, appeals for help of every kind from those in sympathy with "Our Dumb Friends' League." Contributions and offers of assistance should be sent to the Secretary, Grosvenor Gardens House, Victoria, S.W.1.

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Lord Aberdare, Chairman of the National Fitness Council, will open, on Wednesday, March 2nd, an Exhibition entitled "Health, Sport and Fitness," which has been organized by the Royal Institute of British Architects at their headquarters, 66, Portland Place, W.1. The Exhibition will remain open until March 31st and will then go on tour of the principal cities and towns of England. The Exhibition is founded on the idea that everybody's health is everybody's else's business, and that the individual has to be helped to health and fitness. The needs of health are met by adequate nutrition, properly planned facilities for sport and recreation, efficiently organized health services, but chiefly by living and working conditions that themselves create health. The R.I.B.A. hold that good planning saves doctors' bills. They also hold that good design in town, building and open spaces are vital to both the mental and physical well-being of the ordinary man.



To keep pace with the rapidly changing events of modern life it has been decided to issue an Encyclopædia Britannica Year Book annually, so that an up-to-date diary of current economic, scientific and political developments may be available. The first of these is to appear early in April and the contributors will include among others:—Sir Noel Ashbridge, Dr. Ernest Baker formerly Director, University of London School of Librarianship, Sir Charles Bresssey, Professor E. H. Carr, attached to the British Delegation to the Peace Conference, 1919, Sir Walter Citrine, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, Mr. Cleveland Fife, General Secretary National Farmers' Union, Mr. Eric Gill, the Rt. Hon. Douglas Hacking, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, Dean Inge, Dr. R. R. Kuczynski, Maj. Gen. Sir R. McCarrison, Lord Meston, Professor Picard, Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, Sir John Reith, Sir Josiah Stamp, Prof. R. S. Troup and Sir Kingsley Wood. Being produced under the editorship in this country of Mrs. Margaret Dorothy Law, a graduate of Girton College, Cambridge, it will appear simultaneously with a special American edition under the editorship of Mr. Franklin Hooper to whom Mrs. Law is acting as associate for the English edition.

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*Light and Dark*, the magazine for Oxford and Cambridge, published monthly price sixpence, has just celebrated its first birthday. It contains an excellent variety of articles with verse and poetry of an unusually high order. Edmund Blunden, Frederic Prokosch, and Tom Harrison, are among the contributors.

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Not long ago we drew attention in these notes to Ashridge College, Herts. We now have to announce that, owing to ill-health, Major-General Sir Reginald Hoskins has recently resigned the appointment of Principal, a position which he had held since 1929 when the College was first opened. The Governors have appointed to succeed him Mr. Eric J. Patterson, M.A., Head of the Department of International Politics at the University of the South-West of England.